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INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF JOHN THORNTON, ESQ. THE PHILANTHROPIST.

ILLUSTRATED BY ORIGINAL LETTERS.

"Perhaps there never lived a man more deserving of public regard, a pattern in every virtue that could promote the welfare, and improve the interests of mankind: the fondest husband, most benevolent father, devoutest Christian, and sincerest friend. His charities, which almost transcend belief, were rather felt than known, and reached to the remotest part of the habitable globe. He died, without having incurred a censure, during a life of seventy years, from the most licentious of mankind."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1790, page 1056.

SUCH is the truly rare, but not exaggerated character, that was given, in a leading periodical, of JOHN THORNTON, the first English merchant of his age, at the time of his lamented death. More than fifty years have passed away since that event, and yet we are not aware that any attempt has been made to give the catholic church of Christ an account of the life of one of her most munificent and devoted members. True it is, that the venerable Thomas Scott, the commentator, published a discourse occasioned by his death, entitled, "The Love of Christ the Source of Genuine Philanthropy;"* but it was addressed to his cotemporaries, rather than to the men of another age, explaining to those who knew him as a prodigy of benevolence, the scriptural principles which moved like secret springs the complicated machinery of his useful life, but not recording those biographical facts which are necessary to give reality to such a character, when more than half a century has passed away. A series of papers relating to the life and labours of this eminent Christian citizen having fallen into the hands

* Works of the Rev. Thomas Scott, vol. vi. 329—371.

of the writer of this article, he is anxious to place before the public a number of incidents, collected from various sources, which may justify the eulogium that has been quoted, and honour evangelical religion, as the most powerful and prevailing motive that can influence the human mind, to seek the glory of God and the welfare of man.

"Although attached to the church of England in its genuine doctrine, worship, and discipline," yet, Mr. Scott states, "he was equally a cordial friend to pious persons amongst the dissenters." The life of such a man, therefore, is the common property of the catholic church, and happy will it be, if in these times of alienation and bitterness amongst those who are bound to love one another, the example of this Christian philanthropist shall lessen that estrangement, and abate that asperity.

JOHN THORNTON was born about the year 1720, it is presumed of a wealthy family, for it is stated, that he began the world with £100,000. To qualify him for commercial pursuits, he left his native land for Russia before he was of age, and resided four years at Moscow and Riga. Although surrounded by scenes of vice and dissipation, he has recorded that Divine grace restrained him from the evils to which he was exposed.* He was a Russia merchant of London and Hull, but his residence was in the metropolis, having a counting-house in the city, and a handsome villa at Clapham, Surrey. He resided in that lovely suburban village as early as 1754, when the excellent Henry Venn accepted of its curacy. "He was then a young man of deep piety, and whose views of Divine truth soon became congenial with his own. Between them was formed a friendship of the strictest kind, which continued till Mr. Thornton's death,"† of which several illustrations will be supplied in subsequent pages.

Mr. Thornton was not ashamed to be known as a follower of Christ, and was ready to visit his neighbours for their spiritual improvement. Amongst these was the venerable Sir John Barnard, who for forty years represented the city of London in parliament, and was so regarded by his fellow-citizens for his integrity and patriotism, that they erected his statue in the Royal Exchange. The source of this excellent magistrate's public virtue, was his true piety. "My eyes," said Mr. Venn, writing to Mr. Thornton's sister, "have scarce beheld his fellow. Such constant circumspection and such deep humility, such unfeigned Christian love, expressing itself in a total abstinence from evil speaking, is rarely to be found even amongst the faithful in Christ. * * * I rejoice that your dear brother visits him. It is better to go to the house of mourning than the house of mirth. There he may see what a miserable estate the admired senator, the renowned

* Christian Guardian, 1821, p. 20.

† The Life and Letters of the late Rev. Henry Venn, M.A., p. 24.

politician, would be reduced to, if he was not also a real Christian! There he may see the preciousness of the Redeemer; since he will hear, as I have done, from the mouth of that singular man, that it is not all his deeds of virtue, not all his public patriotism or private benevolence which can afford him hope or joy, in the review, or in the prospect of approaching eternity—nothing but the promises of God, made to the humble believer on his dear Son, and ratified in his blood!”*

So decided for God was Mr. Thornton, that the Rev. George Whitefield was invited to his house to conduct religious services, which were attended by over-flowing auditories, at which Mr. Venn was always present. “All is well at Clapham; I have expounded there twice,”† says he, in one of his letters, dated 1756: and on another occasion he writes, “at both ends of the town, the Word runs and is glorified. The champions of the church go on like sons of thunder. I am to be at Clapham this evening. Mr. Venn will gladly embrace the first opportunity. May it be a Bethel.”‡ Such, indeed, was that noble house for more than half a century, where social and domestic worship was not only punctually maintained by its devout proprietor, but was often conducted by many of the most eminent and holy ministers of Christ, who were frequent visitors, and always found a hospitable welcome there.

His connexion with Mr. Whitefield brought Mr. Thornton to know many of those who were labouring for the revival of experimental godliness at home and in the colonies, and who were helped in their work by his Christian bounty.

Amongst others, Samson Occum, an Indian preacher, deserves to be particularized.

At Lebanon, Connecticut, the Rev. E. Wheelock taught an English school. In December, 1743, Samson, an Indian of the Mohegan tribe, solicited admission, and was trained not only to useful learning, but to be a missionary of Christ to his brethren. This success encouraged Mr. Wheelock to form the plan of an Indian Missionary School. In 1762, he had more than twenty Indian youths under his care.§ In March, 1764, Whitefield visited it, and, writing to a friend, says, “How would you have been delighted to have seen Mr. Wheelock’s Indians! Such a promising nursery of future missionaries, I believe, was never seen in New England before: pray encourage it with all your might.”||

This led to the visit of Samson Occum to Great Britain, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Whittaker, minister of Norwich, to appeal for funds to aid this Christian seminary. Mr. Whitefield was delighted with the

* Life and Letters of the late Rev. Henry Venn, M.A., p. 87.

† Whitefield’s Works, vol. iii. p. 194.

‡ Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon, vol. i. p. 219.

§ The American Quarterly Register, vol. v. p. 281.

|| Whitefield’s Works, vol. iii. p. 307.

Indian preacher, and heartily approved of the Indian school. His pulpits, therefore, were open, and his influence employed on its behalf. "The prospect of a large and effectual door opening amongst the heathens, blessed be God," says he, "is very promising. Mr. Occum is a settled, humble Christian. The good and great, with a multitude of a lower degree, heard him preach last week at Tottenham Court Chapel, and felt much of the power and presence of our Lord. Mr. R. hath preached, and collected £100; and I believe £700 or £800 more are subscribed. The truly noble Lord Dartmouth espouses the cause most heartily, and his Majesty is become a contributor. The King of kings, and Lord of all lords will bless them for it."*

Amongst "the good and great" who listened with such delight to Samson Occum, there can be little doubt, but that Mr. Thornton was one. This we conclude from the fact that he not only became a liberal contributor, but also a joint trustee, with Lord Dartmouth and others, of more than £6000, which were collected for that object, and invested in the public funds; besides which, he settled an annuity of one hundred dollars upon Occum during the remainder of his life.†

The Rev. John Newton was amongst the earliest of Mr. Thornton's clerical *protégés*.—That good man was ordained upon the curacy of Olney, in June, 1764, but the stipend was only £30, and fees about £8, and subscriptions of the people about £30 more. With such an income he would have had little for charity, and nothing for hospitality. In this straitness, Mr. Newton "introduced himself to Mr. Thornton, who was known as the common patron of 'every useful and pious endeavour,' by sending him the narrative of his own life, which he had concluded just before the curacy had been offered him, and published the same year. Mr. T. replied, 'in his usual manner,' that is, by accompanying his letter with a valuable bank note; and some months after, he paid Mr. Newton a visit at Olney. A close connexion being now formed between friends who employed their distinct talents in promoting the same benevolent cause, Mr. Thornton left a sum of money with Mr. Newton to be appropriated to the defraying his necessary expenses, and relieving the poor. 'Be hospitable,' said Mr. Thornton, 'and keep an open house for such as are worthy of an entertainment: help the poor and needy: I will stately allow you £200 a year, and readily send whatever you have occasion to draw for more.'‡ During the fifteen years of Mr. Newton's residence in that village, he told Mr. Cecil, that he had received from his munificent friend, for these purposes, upwards of £3000.§

* Whitefield's Works, vol. iii. p. 335.

† Christian Observer, 1812, p. 778; ib. 1814, p. 21.

‡ Southey's Life of Cowper, vol. i. pp. 244, 245.

§ Cecil's Memoirs of Rev. J. Newton, p. 22.

To strengthen the hands, comfort the hearts, and increase the influence of the faithful ministers of Christ, was regarded by the practical mind of Mr. Thornton, to be an important mean of usefulness. Having heard of the excellent character, and singular success of Mr. Conyers, the vicar of Helmsley, North Riding of York, Mr. Thornton made him a visit. Their congeniality of disposition was productive of a friendship, which was uninterruptedly continued during the remainder of their lives. By this intimacy, Mr. Conyers was introduced to Mrs. Knipe, an affluent and pious widow, and sister to Mr. Thornton. Mutual affection ensued, and, in 1765, they were married. Although very opulent, and able to indulge herself in the enjoyment of the superfluities and luxuries of life, yet, like her admirable brother, she exercised self-denial, and generally appeared in a plain, unornamented, camlet gown, and devoted her time and property to the relief of the necessitous. She regularly visited the sick, supplied them with medical assistance, and affectionately conversed with them on the state of their souls. Every Sabbath, a company of about thirty persons, who had come from distant places, were regaled at her hospitable board. This devoted lady was removed from her husband and family after a painful sickness, Feb. 7th, 1774.*

In 1769, Mr. Thornton was appointed high sheriff for the county of Surrey, and he requested his friend, the Rev. H. Venn, then at Huddersfield, to visit Clapham, and to preach before the judges at the spring assizes, at Kingston. He consented, and the discourse was printed. On leaving Mr. Thornton's mansion, he thus wrote :—" I have, this morning, left Mr. Thornton. Oh, that God would make me in my sphere, and every one of us who dwell together, such trees of righteousness as he is! Indeed, his humility can only be equalled by his bounty, and by his watchfulness and diligent use of the means of grace."†

The way in which he sought to engage others to benevolent pursuits, is strikingly illustrated by an anecdote relating to the juvenile years of his illustrious relative Mr. Wilberforce. When "a sharp, fine lad," he was travelling with Mr. Thornton, who gave him a present in money that much exceeded the usual amount of a boy's possessions, which was accompanied with the request that a part of it should be given to the poor, a request, so unusual, and yet, so reasonable, that it helped to form, as Mr. Wilberforce was accustomed to think, what was, undoubtedly, a striking feature of his character—benevolence for the poor.‡

One of Mr. Thornton's largest correspondents was the excellent vicar of Everton. He sent him a present of money, medicine, and books, which was acknowledged, in the following characteristic letter :—

* Evangelical Mag. vol. ii. p. 403.

† Venn's Life and Letters, p. 152.

‡ Life of William Wilberforce, &c. vol. i. p. 5.

TO JOHN THORNTON, ESQ.

Everton, Sept. 29, 1772.

DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,—I received your kind letter yesterday, accompanied with a parcel of books for others, and some parcels of physic for myself; and attended with what you are pleased to call a trifle. May the Lord remember you for this kindness, and multiply his mercy upon you. My Master has been tying me to a whipping-post for four years, and has chastised me smartly with rods and scorpions. Indeed, they were both sorely wanted; for I have a very saucy will, and a sad proud heart, and was grown in my own conceit almost as good a man as my master. He sent me out to preach; and because he was pleased to do wonders by his word and Spirit, I stole all his laurels from him, and girt them around my own temples. But the Lord was jealous of his own honour, and has taken me to task roundly, and made me willing not only to throw the pilfered laurels at his feet, but to cast my scoundrel self there. He has lowered my top-sail, beaten down my masts, ransacked my vessel, and battered its sides so wonderfully, that I am escaped like a mere wreck into haven. I can now feel as well as call myself vile, and can submit to lay my hand upon my mouth, and to thrust my mouth in the dust. Dear sir, how sweet is poverty of spirit and brokenness of heart! It makes me weep kindly tears, and open all my bosom freely, for Jesus; it brings him nigh unto my heart, and makes me clasp him eagerly; it teaches me what grace is, and helps me to prize it; it sinks me down to nothing, and makes me fall as a drop into the ocean; and when I am nothing, Jesus is my all, and fills me, and wins me. Then I become a little child, and my heart is all hosannah. I would die for Jesus. Something of this state I know, but, alas! I am not settled in it; and what I know, was learnt in a house of correction: this house suits me well. I cannot thrive but in a furnace; nor even there, unless it is well blown with the breath of grace. I trust my dear master loves you, and hope he keeps some favourite rod for you. Your situation is lofty, and of course perilous, exposing you to slips and falls. You sail in a very stately vessel; oh, may Jesus grant you ballast to keep it steady! All the glories of the world are but like that painted cloud, which Satan brought upon the eyes of Jesus on the mountain of temptation. I believe you do condemn these tinsel glories; and yet without a gracious rod, you might grow proud of that contempt. You are indebted unto Jesus more than ten thousand others; a very rich man, and yet very likely to be saved! What a miracle of mercy! Oh, love the Lord with all your heart, and serve him well with all your strength. Grace and peace be with you, and with your affectionate servant,

JOHN BERRIDGE.

Mr. Thornton knew the power of the press, and, in his efforts to distribute Bibles, and other religious books, he anticipated the spirited efforts of the present age. He undertook himself to edit "The Golden Treasury," which was enriched with some compositions of Cowper and Newton, that afterwards were published in the Olney Hymns. Conscious of his own deficiencies as a writer, it appears he submitted portions of the work, in manuscript, to his friend Berridge, and gave him full liberty to criticise the same. The following letters, although they contain verbal criticisms, yet, are so illustrative of the characters of the correspondents, as to deserve a place in these collections.

Everton, April 3, 1773.

DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,—Your first paper on 2 Kings xxii. 8, is pertinent and striking. I can find nothing here to pick a quarrel with, except a poor little *then*,

at the conclusion, which occurs thrice in four lines. The last *then* may be turned out of doors without ceremony, for his company is not wanted, and his note, by frequent repetition, groweth troublesome. Your remarks on 2 Chron. xxxii. 24, are ingenious, and the reflections at the close are weighty. But there is a fly or two in this pot of ointment, which may be picked out. The word *craftily*, seems rather too strong and base a word for Hezekiah: it denotes a fraudulent purpose, as well as carnal policy. And though Hezekiah acted unfaithfully to the God of Israel, he meant no treachery to the king of Babylon. Suppose the sentence ran thus: "Hezekiah foolishly sought to avail himself of this false notion of the king of Babylon, and by not affronting their god, hoped to gain," &c. Again: *worldly wisdom* occurs twice in the space of five lines; but short comments should contain multum in parvo, and of course be free from repetitions, or identical expressions. Suppose the sentence was expressed in some such manner as this: "Carnal policy and pride of heart proved a snare to Hezekiah, and prove the ruin of all sinners that perish. They are too wise to be taught of God; and too lofty to lie at the feet of Jesus." Your comment on Deut. xxxiii. 26, is nervous, and your reflections are pertinent; but an application at the close seemeth wanting, to give the comment proper length and full weight. I have some objection against your double *verily*. No prophet used it before Christ, nor any apostle after Christ: it seems an expression peculiarly belonging unto him who is Truth itself; and therefore only fit for him to use. I am persuaded the text was originally wrote thus: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth on the heavens, for thy help, and on the sky, for *thy* excellence;" i. e. to make thee excellent. Thus the two expressions tally, and the 26th verse perfectly corresponds with the 29th: "Happy art thou, O Israel! who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, who is the shield of *thy* help, and the sword of *thy* excellence." What follows is sent as a supplement to the third paper, which you may alter, curtail, or reject at pleasure; making as free with my ink, as I do with your pen. I begin with your Reflections. "How safe then must they be, who are under the wing of the God of Jeshurun, who find him reconciled to them by the death of his Son, and feel themselves reconciled to him by the power of his grace! He rideth on the heavens for their help, and none can outstrip his progress, or obstruct his purpose. Verily, He it is, that giveth strength and victory to his people; blessed be God! Reader, is the God of Jeshurun, the God of Israel, thy God? Is He who rideth on the heavens thy help? Does thy heart trust in him alone; and does his grace subdue thine outward iniquities, and thine inbred corruptions? Is He, who rideth on the sky, thy excellence? does he seem only excellent in thine eyes, and cause thee to excel in virtue? Has He planted thee among his excellent ones of the earth, and made thee to abound in faith, and love, and fruits of righteousness? If the Lord is not thy help, alas! thou wilt be slain by sin, and prove a ruined soul. If the Lord is not thy excellence, thou art still an apostate spirit, a stranger unto God, and to his Christ. Awake, arise, and call on God. His ear is open unto prayer, and thou art yet on mercy's ground. Oh, call upon him speedily, and cry unto him earnestly, that thou perish not."

Mr. Cowper's hymn needs no advocate to plead its cause; it speaks sufficiently for itself: but the poor author cannot take the comfort of *his* own hymn, being now in much deplorable distress. How dark and feeble is a Christian understanding, without the light and comfort of God's holy Spirit! Dear sir, you have much business on your hands, and will need much prayer, beside family worship, to keep the world at your feet, and God in your heart. Where many irons are in the fire, a live coal had need be in the heart continually, else, whilst we are waiting on other vineyards, we shall neglect our own; and whilst we are enriching others, we may impoverish our own spirits. I find you walk much; and I hope you can wear your shoes out with

praying, as well as walking. Praying walks are healthful walks indeed: they fetch down corruption as well as carcase. I wish you right Christian cheer every day, a gentle cup of tribulation, and a full cup of supplication, sweetened with Divine communion. The good will of Him that dwelt in the bush, dwell with you, and yours, and with

JOHN BERRIDGE.

TO JOHN THORNTON, ESQ.

Everton, May 3rd, 1773.

DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,—Your papers keep up a good spirit, and do not evaporate on the reading—the former pieces were good, but your last bottle, I think, is best of all. It is well brewed for the stomach, and much disposed to whet the appetite and quicken digestion. Happy it is, when both a bride and her groom have the heart to become common brewers for Jesus Christ. I cannot relish doctrinal preaching, or doctrinal printing: it leaves a careless sinner and a formal professor just where it found them. Discourses are likely to do good, when, like your paper, they stimulate reflection, force a reader to rummage his bosom, set the sinner a quarrelling with himself, and push a lazy pilgrim on a *trot*. I perused your paper with such a cavilling heart, as you would wish, and searched diligently to pick some hole in your coat, but no rent can I find, only a stitch or two seems to be let down. The sentiments are lively and proper, but, perhaps, the words of one sentence might be altered, as follows, “If thy peace with an offended God is not already made through the blood of atonement, or is not earnestly seeking after”—thus the two parts of the sentence tally, (is not made, or is not seeking after,) which should be regarded in writing. Further, “to have fellowship and communion,” is the same thing as to have fellowship and fellowship, or communion and communion—both the words have the same meaning, only one is English and the other Latin. Either would do well, if the other was rejected. These little niceties are overlooked in common talk, or from a pulpit, but are not well received from the press. Well, dear Sir, these two stitches belong to the lady’s gown, the next belongs to your coat. “Alas! for the fir trees, when the cedars shake!” Here is a point of admiration too much—only one can be admitted at the end. The particle “*for*,” should be governed by “*alas*,” but is cut off from that government by the point of admiration, which always makes either a full period, or a distinct member of a sentence. I suppose this was only a hasty dash of the pen, which might readily be made, because the word “*alas*” is commonly followed by a note of admiration. Your paper consists of five paragraphs, and if a short black line was added at the end of each paragraph, it would make the transition more observable to a common reader. Mr. Newton’s hymn is, like himself, sensible, serious, and pithy; and, if he has got a barrow full of such hymns, I wish he would wheel them into the world. Perhaps the twentieth line of the Raven hymn may need a little quickening:

“By ravens he sends them their food,”*

the words, “sends them their food,” being monosyllables, and very long quantities, and following each other close, make the line drag heavily, which might easily be remedied, as follows:

“By ravens he sendeth their food.”

* This hymn, “On Elijah fed by the Ravens, 1 Kings xvii. 6,” is the thirty-fifth in the first book of the Olney Hymns. The twentieth line is amended, but not in the way Mr. Berridge suggested, for it now stands,

“He sends them by ravens their food.”

I can despair of no serious Arian, after the change which has been wrought in myself. Near thirty years I was an avowed enemy to Christ's divinity, and when God had given me some knowledge of his Christ, and sent me forth to preach his Gospel, it was three years before I was fairly rescued from this quicksand. You judge exceedingly right, to stand still, and avoid disputings; they only gender strife, and stir up pride. A sweet behaviour, joined with secret prayer, will do more in this matter than a thousand eager disputations. Perhaps, before you have worn another pair of shoes out in supplication, Mrs. Th——n may behold her Saviour's Godhead, and exult in it. The paper shows she is endued with a vein of manly sense, and, what is better still, a strain of serious piety.

I return you hearty thanks for the enclosed paper, and will now tell you what I do with my money, and how the paper will be applied. My living is £160 a-year: £100 of which defrays the expense of house-keeping, horse-keeping, servants' wages, my own raiment, and Sunday food and liquor for poor pilgrims who come to church from afar. I keep no company; pay no visits, but preaching ones; and receive no visits but from travelling Christians, who are welcomed with some hashed meat, unless they chance to come on boiling days, which are twice a-week. The work of God has extended itself from Everton, by means of field-preaching, into four counties, viz., Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, and Cambridgeshire. Near forty towns have been evangelized, many of which lay at a great distance from each other, and two lay preachers ride from town to town, preaching morning and evening every day. These are yearly allowed £25 a piece, to provide themselves with horses and clothes, and defray turnpike expenses. There are also six Sunday preachers, who often want support, and receive it from me. By this means the Gospel is preached without charge to the hearers. No collections are made, which mightily stoppeth the world's clamour. But, Sir, besides these constant outgoings, I have a thousand other occasional demands upon me. The flocks in every place are very poor, and often distressed, on account of their religion. Labouring men have been turned out of work; and some, who are unable to work, through sickness, lameness, or old age, have been deprived of parish collection, or received a very scanty one, because they are Methodists. These you may think will apply to me for relief—true, you reply, but how are you able to relieve them? I will tell you, Sir. When I began to preach the Gospel, I was possessed of £140 in money, and a paternal inheritance of £24 a year. The money was first expended—then I sold some needless plate and books for £50—this also was expended—and, lastly, I sold my inheritance, which is not half expended. I scatter my mites about, because I am trading for another world. What silver and copper is left behind me, will profit me nothing; but what is given for Christ's sake will find a *gracious* recompense. The world would call me a fool for this traffic, but they will see and own hereafter, that I carried my goods to the best market. The walls of my house are made of plaster, and very leaky in some parts, and I fear the wood-work is decayed; they have wanted repairing for some years, but I could not find a heart to repair them, because of the expense. Some part of your donation shall now be applied to this purpose, and the rest to Christ's poor. My health, through mercy, is better, and I am able to travel two or three days in a week to preach. It would delight you to see how crowded my cathedrals are, and what abundance of hearers they contain, when the grain is threshed out. I believe more children have been born of God in any one of these despised barns, than in St. Paul's Church or Westminster Abbey. The Lord direct you in all your concerns, and keep you travelling right forward in the way to Canaan, with a warm heart, a cool head, a nimble foot, and praying lip. Grace and peace be with you, and with your obliged and affectionate servant,

(To be continued.)

JOHN BERRIDGE.

ON EDUCATION FOR THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY AMONG DISSENTERS.

ALL who take a correct view of the Gospel ministry, and of pastoral influence, must rejoice at the growing interest felt in our theological seminaries. It is now agreed upon, that our younger brethren, who are looking forward to the sacred office, should have every advantage which circumstances allow; and good people wonder, that there ever should have been a question on the subject. For my own part, while I fully share in these feelings, and urge the pursuit of good attainments, I would nevertheless consider the circumstances of the case, and give each candidate for the ministry, that compass of education, which age and previous training will allow him to secure; and I would neither stretch the short, nor amputate the tall, by a vain attempt to bring all to the same dimensions.

The dissenting churches must determine, either to bring up boys for the ministry, and thus, like the national system, hazard piety; or they must secure piety when age has stamped it with reasonable certainty, and hazard a high degree of learning: and woe be the day, when they shall prefer a well-educated, ungodly pastor, to one of less accomplishments indeed, yet of unquestionable religion! As far, however, as both piety and learning can be secured, it is refreshing to see the churches resolved to enjoy the two-fold benefit.

I hope, therefore, I may be permitted to question, whether it is wise in all our older collegiate institutions, to raise the standard of education so high, as to compel the formation of an academy for home missionaries exclusively. It appears to me, that some of them would have done better by a course which would give the more aged and the less prepared, full advantage of the English, the Greek Testament, and of divinity, together with the ordinary appendages of geography, history, natural and mental philosophy, &c.; and the younger, and those on whom

"Fair science frowned not at their birth,"

a substantial and comprehensive training. Nothing can be more clear than that the former class of students often possess much good common sense, and physical as well as moral energy, fitting them for usefulness in some departments in the church; and that most of this class would be injured rather than benefited by attempting high classical learning, and, as a necessary consequence, by only partially acquiring those branches of education, which, by undistracted application, they are well able to master.

The remarks, however, which I have to make, will chiefly apply to the best way of providing, for students of the higher class, the greatest advantages.

In limine, two desirable objects present themselves to us, to secure both of which, no effort should be spared. The one is, an increase of students whose early training has been favourable. Why should a young man consider his property a mark of exemption from the work of the Lord; or, if he enter on that work, why should it prove to him, that he ought to conform to the Established church? Is he under less obligation because he has received greater kindness than others; and is the long-mooted question of ecclesiastical polity to be settled by reference to the Bank of England? We hope the day will soon arrive, when this libel on our principles shall have been removed; and when the most opulent members of our churches, richer still in grace and in gifts, will preach the truth in the pulpits, whence they and their fathers have received conviction and consolation—"the Gospel not in word only."

The introduction of a greater proportion belonging to this class into our colleges, will greatly facilitate the labour of the tutors in giving a superior education: the greatest care, however, must be taken, not to admit students who are merely gentlemen, and exclude those whose hearts burn with love to Christ and to souls.

Divine Providence, notwithstanding, teaches, that we must look to an order of men less indulged with paternal affluence, for the majority of our future ministers; and, therefore, no exertion should be spared to raise the standard of education among the sons of our ordinary tradesmen, &c.

Now, we believe that the number of boys who learn Latin might be multiplied tenfold, and thus, the chances—if such a term may be used—would be increased, of a young man, called by Divine grace and disposed to the Christian ministry, being, in some degree, prepared for the higher studies in our colleges. Persons who only theorize on education form no adequate idea of the difference, through the whole course, between a student who has enjoyed a good early training, and, *cæteris paribus*, one whose boyhood has, in this respect, been neglected. The chasm in the rock may, by subsequent deposit, be filled up, but the vein will still remain patent. Dr. Johnson needs not to have indulged his prejudices, by saying, a Scotchman may be made something of if he be caught young; the same may be predicated of mankind in general. By early culture, we should not only raise the mental character of our laymen, but provide also for higher scholarship in our younger ministers, without the danger, too, of cherishing thoughts of the ministerial office in the unconverted and unholy mind. This is of immense importance, and it is worth our enquiry how it can be most effectually obtained. No small advance, we conceive, would be made towards gaining this object, were ministers, and other persons of influence, to point out to parents the desirableness of the attainment we recommend, so far as their means will allow them to educate their sons; to show them that, in many cases, as much time and money is consumed on a

defective English education, as would secure a good one—that boys who learn Latin are seldom inferior in the other exercises of a school—that the attention required to learn a foreign language, strengthens, refines, and corrects the mind, fitting it to enter upon any secular employment with superior power—and, that this course will insure all these advantages at a very little additional expense—advantages which will be seen through life, even should a Roman author never be perused after leaving the school.

I may be allowed here to remark, that it is a subject as much deserving the attention of our churches, as it is of the national community, that such masters only should be recommended, as are qualified to give a solid, elementary education; and that a college or Normal school should be provided, to assist those who intend to assume the office of teachers. The clergy are much alive to this subject. What an elevation, too, would this give to our Sabbath-school teachers, and to our hearers in general, even should none, so taught, enter the Christian ministry!

The above preparation being obtained, I would recommend my brethren, who have superior Bible classes, &c., or who meet young men at their master's houses, to encourage those who have acquired a little classical knowledge, to read some good theological work in Latin, during their apprenticeship; and to bring to the class, written etymologies of Divinity terms. These might be read to others in the class, while the writers would recall to their memories former attainments.

Let ministers, too, when a young man presents himself to their notice, as likely to enter one of our colleges, whose case requires time to form a wise decision, urge him to recover his school learning, and, if possible, to make advances, assuring him, that whatever may be the result of his present debate, such a course will do him great service. It is to be lamented, that many a worthy pastor overlooks this duty, and allows one, two, or even three years to pass away without any improvement of his young friend; or, that he employs him rather in village preaching and other functions of pastoral aid, than in cultivating his own mind; thus, "*Fugit irreparabile tempus*," and a meagre character of scholarship is fixed for life. O! the worth of three years between eighteen and twenty-one.

How numerous are the instances where a youth has some leisure for reading; and how easy, in many cases, would it be for the minister, either to direct the study of his friend himself, or to refer him to some master in the neighbourhood! A few hours in the week, for a term of years, spent judiciously, and regularly, would tell a delightful tale through all the college exercises.

In approaching the colleges themselves, I would assert, that the problem we have to work is—*how to impart the greatest quantity of useful learning, and to form the best habits, at the least expense.*

I conceive, that the systems usually adopted at present, are not incapable of improvement, with respect to both these desiderata. I feel persuaded, that a better education may be obtained at a less expense, by employing our colleges, as they now stand, in preparatory work, and instituting, in connexion with the London University College, a divinity hall, on principles sufficiently comprehensive to admit the students of all orthodox dissenters, without any compromise or danger of their distinctive peculiarities, respecting church government, baptism, or forms of worship.

My suggestion is, to render our present colleges good grammar schools, &c., in which, under a competent master or masters, young men should devote two or three years, according to their previous advantages, chiefly to the study of the Latin and Greek classics, mathematics, English literature, history, the Greek Testament, and reading, under direction, some good works on theology, Scripture geography, and antiquities, &c. By this time, the students will have been prepared for matriculation at the London University, when we recommend their removal from their respective colleges into lodgings, in the neighbourhood of the London University College. Within a mile of this seminary I would have a divinity hall, erected or procured, containing a sufficient number of lecture rooms, a common room, library, offices, and, perhaps, one or more suites of rooms for a tutor, as well as one for the warden. There, while the students acquire the Hebrew language, and perfect themselves in classical and scientific learning, they should go through a sound course of theological studies, extending through three sessions, and occupying about two years and a half. The lectures in the hall may be so arranged, that the students may be able to attend the University College classes till they have graduated; and so as to take full advantage of two-thirds of the long vacation in the University College, for uninterrupted application to the exercises in the hall. Thus, the two courses would take from four years and a half to five years and a half, the preparatory time being regulated by the previous attainments of the pupils.

This plan would secure the following ADVANTAGES:—

1st, An innocent and a powerful stimulus would be given to the studies of our young brethren. The faculty, indeed, of graduating at the London University, of which several of the colleges have availed themselves, has, no doubt, infused a healthy excitement into some of our students; but this is by no means general. The plan, however, suggested, would act on *all*, as none should be admitted into the hall without passing such an examination, as the council of the hall, and not their own tutors, shall appoint. I need not say a word to show the importance of this impetus, to those who are practically acquainted with our colleges, and, indeed, with human nature itself.

2nd, Nor is the very change of residence and associations a small

advantage. Six years have often been recommended for the whole course of studies at a college ; and, perhaps, in many cases, this time is sufficiently brief ; but who does not know, that a young man, whose early habits have not been the most favourable, whose heart glows with holy affections, who pants for useful occupation in the ministry, and who feels an impetuosity natural to his age, usually becomes weary of a college in three or four years, and is under the necessity of summoning up all his philosophy and higher principles, to remain contented in statu pupilaris, the whole of the appointed season ? There are exceptions, but I speak of the rule. Now the plan before us has a graceful bending in the middle, and the eye is not fatigued with a long, an apparently, interminable straight path ; the pupil first looks to his transition, to the hall and university, and having gained this place, and turned the corner, and found himself in different circumstances, and different studies, he feels refreshed, and marches on with spirit, to his ultimate goal, as a mere student.

3rd, Our plan, we conceive, will insure, in most, if not in all, useful and respectable attainments ; for it will be the fault of the divinity council, if the student be admitted into their department without being reasonably prepared ; and of the churches, if they accept a young man as their pastor, without testimonials from the hall, as well as from the college. What would be the scholarship of many of the clergy, if the bishops ordained, not only without a degree, but also without a literary examination ?

4th, It has already been suggested, that the church ought to educate two distinctive classes of students—one simply for plain, popular work, and another, for stations demanding more scholastic attainments. This plan will accommodate itself to each of these classes. The valuable young men, who may be of the former order, having obtained preparation in English literature and the Greek Testament, might pass a suitable examination at the hall, and attend those professors in the University College, and, especially in the divinity hall, who lecture on subjects for which they are prepared, and receive an appropriate testimonial.

5th, We readily admit, that economy is a secondary virtue in this great business ; yet, it is not to be overlooked, especially when the chief expenses fall on the public, and when the expenses are to be raised on the voluntary principle—or nearly so, from that portion of the religious public, too, whose resources, though, perhaps, greater than some of themselves imagine, are comparatively circumscribed, and not slightly taxed by their own generous consent.

A paper was published in the Evangelical Magazine, for the year 1838, p. 548, which the writer of this approves, containing an estimate of the expenses of a *small* college, and showing, that they rise above the necessary expenditure in either of the English universities, and much above those in Scotland. That paper was handled somewhat

roughly by gentlemen, jealous of the reputation of our colleges, as it concerns economy, and the author of it, whoever he might be, was supposed to have lived in the moon ; as if, however,

“ Jam nova progenies cœlo demittitur alto,”

the Patriot has published statements of expenditure, which go far towards establishing the principles laid down in that paper. All I will now assert is, that by considerable reduction in the salaries of tutors at the grammar institutions—for the subjects being few, a principal and two assistants would be ample for our largest colleges—and, by the professors at the hall having to lecture to very large classes, there will be a still greater saving there, and the professors themselves remunerated better than they now are.

It is chiefly in the items of *rent*, and of incidental expenses, that most estimates are below the truth. I may be allowed to refer to the two promising colleges, now rising in the neighbourhoods of Birmingham and Manchester, as proof of my assertion respecting rent. If my memory is correct, each, according to the published statements of their friends, will cost in building, furnishing libraries, &c., about £25,000. Here, then, is a rental of £1250 per annum, to be divided amongst the students, who may vary from thirty to fifty. As to the item of *items*, as it may well be called, namely, incidental expenses, I can only say, that they always amount to more than any one, not experienced in these things, would predict ; and that, too, where the most rigid attention is paid to economy in all things. Now, add to the above rental, as much for board, &c., and as much for tutors, and other ordinary expenses, and remember, that almost each year brings some demand, which the managers of our institutions *wish* to think extraordinary, and you will perceive, that when the whole is divided by forty, the cost of education for each inmate, benefited by those colleges, will not be a very small sum.

Presuming that the hall were attended by from 150 to 200 pupils, I do not hesitate to say, that at least £100 would be saved the public in the entire education of each candidate for the ministry ; and what is of much greater importance, more liberal habits would be formed, both of thinking and acting, and a more substantial education be obtained, than on the present system. I say this with feelings of the highest respect for the gentlemen who now guide the studies in our colleges ; recommending another system, not other men.

OBJECTIONS.—Some friends of village preaching will object to this plan, that it will remove from the respective localities of our colleges, the means of supplying their village and other pulpits ; and thus not only inconvenience pastors, but lessen home missionary exertions. When, however, it is remembered, that our proposal is chiefly with a view to the colleges within a few miles of the metropolis, at least, for

a time, and these places will be occupied still, though by junior students, the force of the objection is destroyed. There will be a sufficient number of young men left to attend to the college, school, and village congregations; and it is not desirable that students, till a late period of their course, should often occupy the pulpits of larger places: besides, the railroads almost annihilate distance.

2. "You would remove the students," another objector will say, "from domestic comfort and observation, and all the advantages of a well-regulated family, to the deprivations and dangers of lodgings, and of residence in London. This objection, however, only applies to the last two and a half years of the whole course. Those, indeed, who think poetically of the domestic comforts and spirituality of a college, with from twenty to fifty students in it, will have painful feelings on this subject, with which such as look only at prosaic facts will hold little sympathy. The writer would not weep, though all our colleges, like that of the London University, were nothing more than DAY SCHOOLS; convinced, as he is, that the young soldier will not be injured by learning to endure hardships, and that there is more danger in too much association than in too much seclusion. If, too, a young man, whose temper, conduct, and principles have been for three years under close inspection, is not to be trusted to his own discretion, the sooner he expose his real character, the better for the church, and even for himself. In our judgment, the mixing, at class, with large numbers of students at the university college and the hall, of various habits and opinions, in minor respects, would powerfully tend to improve the manners and liberalize the mind; and the competition will not only promote diligence, but exert a good moral influence over a clever youth, by suppressing vanity, as, amidst so many, each will find his equal, and all but one, his superior.

3. As to the mischief which may arise out of mental and sectarian collision, we consider there is no just ground of alarm. The divinity hall, be it remembered, would be as much under an orthodox and pious superintendence, as are our present institutions; and under proper restraints, a little sifting of principles will be a good exercise preparatory to the earnest contention for them, which real life will demand. Our young brethren are not likely to terminate their soldier-ship with mere *reviews*; the battle-field is before them. Large bodies of men, too, though it may appear to be a paradox, are more favourable to retirement and *select friendships* than small ones; this is very evident at Oxford and Cambridge, where the halls and colleges are so uneven in their respective numbers.

4. It is natural to fear, that the residence near the hall may weaken attachment to the college which has adopted a student as her son. But few good men can forget their first Alma Mater; and in most cases the grateful affection to her is stronger after leaving her

immediate presence. The relationship, too, must be preserved; for the preparatory college will still support her own students at the hall; and, of course, will have a claim on their subjection to her bye-laws, their occasional attendance, and perhaps examinations. Lodging-houses, too, might have to report behaviour; and the preaching engagements of the divinity students might be made by the principal of the college. No testimonial should be valid without the signature of the college tutors, &c. We think affection would be strengthened towards the first institution; as home is generally more dear to the youth who returns to it from boarding-school.

It is not for the writer to pronounce on these suggestions, though he has bestowed upon them some thought, and thought assisted by experience and observation. He submits them with deference to all whom they may concern; not daring to hope, indeed, that such a plan will be at once adopted, yet feeling confident that the time will come, when the principles here recommended, however modified in detail, will be generally acted upon—when we shall begin with a GOOD GRAMMAR SCHOOL, and end with a GOOD THEOLOGICAL HALL, OF UNIVERSITY.

J. K. FOSTER.

Sittingbourne.

A CRITICAL INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND SUBJECTS OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

THE various and contrary opinions held by Christians respecting some of the doctrines and services of their religion, are often made the subject of reproach by irreligious sceptics; and they occasion, not unfrequently, much anxiety to many devout believers in Christianity. It is thought to be not a little strange, that the book which contains the revelation of God, should give rise to so many controversies, and produce such diversities of sentiment and practice. And strange, assuredly, it would be, if the Bible were the real source of all the opinions which are professedly derived from it; if, when studied with proper diligence and method, it conducted to contradictory conclusions, on matters of the highest personal importance, those who humbly and honestly sought for truth in its pages. But, before this be admitted, it should be considered, how far these opinions can fairly be attributed to the word of God. May not some of them result from a superstitious reverence for tradition; or, from a rash spirit of theorizing; or, from the neglect of right principles of interpretation? We do not, now, blame the works of God, on account of the false systems of philosophy which once prevailed; as little reason is there to blame the word of God, for the false notions of religion which still exist. When men, instead of studying the book of nature, studied the traditions of a former

age ;—when, instead of seeking, by observation, to learn how the world was constituted, they endeavoured, by reasoning, to ascertain how it ought to have been made ;—when, instead of carefully surveying all that could be brought under examination, they thought the knowledge of a few cases sufficient to justify the most general conclusions,—little could be expected but inconsistent, useless, and erroneous doctrines. The methods, by which we have been led to a right interpretation of nature, must be observed, to secure a right interpretation of Scripture. Instead of repairing for instruction to the volumes of the Fathers, Christians must go to the volume of inspiration ; instead of framing a complete system of religion from a few doubtful maxims, and obscure texts, they must receive, as children, the wisdom which cometh from above,—neither adding to it, nor taking aught away, nothing enlarging, and nothing diminishing ;—and then, but not before, may we hope that they will all agree ; being “ perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.” The present diversity of opinion is the reproach of the church, and not of the Bible. It has arisen from the adoption of other guides, and not from the reception of its teaching. Only that unity which exists in the Bible, can produce that unity in the church, which is so much to be desired.

The ceremonies belonging to Christianity are not frequently referred to in the New Testament ; and when noticed, much importance is not attributed to them ; but they have been made the occasions of many controversies. Among these controversies, those relating to the nature, subjects, and mode of baptism, continue to hold a chief place. The common propensity of men, to prefer what is ceremonial, to what is spiritual, may, alone, lead us to expect many corruptions in this department of the Christian system ; and shows the necessity of repairing to the only pure source of truth, the only sure standard by which all religious opinions should be tried—the word of God. Having in a former series of papers prosecuted an inquiry into the mode, we purpose, now, to institute a similar inquiry into the nature and subjects of Christian baptism. These two topics are more closely connected than is commonly supposed. In the progress of the discussion it will, we think, clearly appear, that the views which are held in regard to the nature of this ordinance, almost determine those which must be held in respect to the subjects. The two branches of our inquiry, therefore, cannot, with propriety, be altogether separated.

The different opinions which have been entertained, concerning the nature of Christian baptism, may be resolved into these three. First, Some have supposed that it could properly be administered, only to those who have been truly converted to God, whose hearts have been changed by the Gospel of Christ, which they have believed. According to this view, he who receives baptism, receives it as a mark that he is already renewed and purified in mind ; for it is held that all

such persons, and only such, ought to receive it. And he who confers the ordinance, does it as a mark that he is satisfied with the professed convert; for when satisfied, but not till then, he ought to administer it. This representation of Christian baptism, exactly accords with the nature of the Jewish purification, observed by those who had recovered from the leprosy. In such cases, the person restored to health, went to a priest for this ceremony. By applying for his purification, he professed that his leprosy was healed. But this profession was not sufficient; the priest was ordered, closely and carefully to examine the patient; and when convinced, by personal inspection, that the malady was cured, he sprinkled the leper seven times with blood and water, and declared him to be clean. It was not necessary that this rite should be described as a mark or sign of bodily purity; its use constituted it such. Now, if it be thought that only regenerated persons should apply for the rite of Christian baptism, and that they who administer it, should have satisfactory evidence that the applicants are regenerated, then it becomes a mark or sign, that they who are baptized, profess to have been regenerated, and that they who baptize, credit this profession. As the ceremonial purification, administered by the Jewish priest, was a *sign* of corporeal cleansing from disease, which the leper had already experienced; so it must be thought, that the ceremonial purification, administered by the Christian minister, is a *sign* of the spiritual cleansing, which every regenerated person has already experienced. It may not be so described, but its use, as in the parallel case, clearly determines its character. Other things may be exhibited also, but if Christian baptism is to be observed in this manner, it must be the *sign* of a professed and credited moral regeneration.*

Secondly, This rite is by others thought to be properly administered to infant children, as well as to adults; and when administered by proper persons, it is imagined to be the means of effecting a change in the spiritual nature, and religious condition of the recipients. It is said, that when the water of baptism has fallen on a babe, it is no longer what it was before. A great and most beneficial alteration has been effected, unseen indeed at the time, but leading we are told, to consequences most evident and momentous. According to this representation, the water of baptism resembles that of Siloam, to which, at the bidding of Jesus, the blind man went, and washed, and received sight. The change produced in the latter case was physical and material, and that attributed to baptism is moral and spiritual; but in both, the means

* "In baptism, we profess to have renewed spiritual life."—Booth. "Baptism is a figure of washing away sins, with respect to those who are already washed."—Carson. "It is necessary that we should have satisfactory evidence of the regeneration of the candidate for baptism, prior to the performance of the rite."—Cox.

employed owe their wonderful efficacy, to an extraordinary appointment of God. The miraculous virtue of the water of the font is, of course, as possible, as that of the pool; all that we should in either case desire is, sufficient evidence that the change really is effected. They who hold this view believe that all persons, children, and adults, if rightly baptized, are thereby made new creatures; and in their esteem, Christian baptism is the *MEANS* of spiritual regeneration.*

Thirdly, In the judgment of others, this ceremony is not the mark of regeneration already effected in the minds of those who receive it; nor is it preternaturally, the means of effecting this change. It is the statement in symbolical language of a Christian doctrine, being an *emblem* of that moral purification which all the children of men require, and which all may obtain if they will seek it by trusting to the Lord Jesus Christ. Where this view is taken, baptism may be regarded as also the token of certain associated promises; and the sign of external connexion with the disciples of Christ, and of an acknowledgment of his Divine mission. It may, moreover, be regarded as a means of introducing to this connexion; and also as a means, in common with every exhibition of Christian truth, of spiritual change, and moral improvement. What is maintained by the advocates of this view, in opposition to the two before mentioned, is, that Christian baptism is not the *sign* or the *means* of the spiritual renovation of the person baptized, but that it is an *EMBLEM* of that regeneration or purifying of the soul, which, by the Gospel, is promised to all who believe.

We have to inquire which of these views accords with the statements of the New Testament. It is agreed that Christian baptism has some connexion with the regeneration of the soul. What is this connexion? Is it that of a particular sign? Or is it that of a preternatural instrument? Or is it that of a general emblem? Such an inquiry as this, one might suppose, could not be very difficult. We may hope soon to reach the truth, if we pursue the right way. If baptism be a *sign* of the possession of a renewed mind, this will appear from the nature of the rite, or from the character assigned to it by the sacred writers, or from the manner of its administration. If it be the *means* of producing a renewed mind, this also must appear from the nature of the performance, or from the declarations of inspired men concerning it, or from the effects which are known to result from it. And, in like manner, if it be an *emblem* of spiritual regeneration, this will be evident, from a consideration of its physical nature, and from the various references made to it, by the writers of the New Testament. "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." "To the law and to the testimony."

* "Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate, &c." "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy holy Spirit, &c." Book of Common Prayer.

Before examining the evidence of Scripture in regard to the nature of this religious rite; it will be proper to consider what is there taught concerning the nature of the religious rites which previously existed. This is necessary in order that the evidence concerning baptism may be duly appreciated. We do not assume that Christian baptism was in all respects the same as Jewish baptism. But as it possessed the same form, and bore the same appellation, at least a presumption exists, that there is a general accordance, and no difference in any thing essential. Christianity has an external purification with water, which is performed as a religious service, and which is named a baptism: Judaism had external purifications with water, which were performed as religious services, and which were named baptisms. There is some probability that the Christian and Jewish rites being alike, both in appearance and designation, are also alike, in their whole nature: and we may conclude with certainty that they are alike, unless some difference be expressly mentioned. In the interpretation of any new law, we look to the known interpretation of similar laws, and judge that there is to be an accordance of usage, where no statement of difference is made. And in the study of natural objects, if a partial agreement is observed, an entire accordance is inferred, unless there are indications of diversity. So too, in investigating the nature and usage of Christian baptism, we ought to look to the known nature and usage of similar rites, and to conclude, that agreement exists, where difference is not proved. The mode of reasoning which is universally adopted in reference to human laws and natural objects, is equally appropriate to the laws of God, and the institutions of religion. In pursuing this plan our object is, not to prejudice the matter, before direct evidence is adduced, but simply, to exhibit those considerations which are necessary to a right estimation of this evidence. We would conduct the inquirer to the position occupied by the first Christians; from this position, the object he would survey may be most clearly and completely seen.

It may perhaps be objected, that the difference between the Jewish and Christian dispensations is so great, that we cannot with propriety argue from the former to the latter. There were many things in Judaism which are not found in Christianity, and there are many things in Christianity which were not found in Judaism. Analogical evidence must always vary with the degree of observed correspondence, being strong where the resemblance is great, and feeble where it is small. All this is readily granted, but in reply it may be observed; first, That the proper application of this principle of reasoning is, to the parts of Judaism and of Christianity, rather than to the two complete systems. The Christian system in some things differs much from the Jewish, in others it has a close resemblance. We may not argue from the institutions of Moses to those of Christ, when we have no direct information

of the latter, or where they are obviously different in name, appearance, or design. But we may thus argue where there is such an obvious correspondence, as that which exists between the purifications with water called baptisms under the old dispensation, and the purification with water called baptism under the new. Secondly, This objection does not in the least affect the inference drawn from previous customs in regard to the language of Scripture. Whether Christianity differs much from Judaism or not, this is certain, that its chief differences required at first to be pointed out; and they are distinctly stated. We may be quite sure that if in its nature and usage, Christian purification differs essentially from the Jewish rites to which the first Christians were accustomed, this difference will be very apparent. A little direct evidence should suffice to convince us, that the nature and usage of Christian and Jewish ceremonies are the same, since, first, there is some probability of their accordance; and secondly, we could not expect much, if any, notice of the absence of change in well known customs. But on the other hand, only clear and strong evidence should lead us to believe that these rites differ in their character and efficacy—since, first, such a supposition is in some degree antecedently improbable; and secondly, it cannot be doubted, that, if Christian rites possessed a character and efficacy unlike any thing belonging to Jewish rites, this new character and efficacy would be expressly ascribed to them, and their difference from former institutions would be noticed. What has the colour and sound of copper, we readily believe to be copper, without any further proof; but we should be persuaded that it was gold only by the most decisive evidence.

We purpose then first to consider, the nature of the three principal rites of Judaism, Purification, Circumcision, and Sacrifice. If these were the signs of a spiritual change already experienced, or the means of producing such a change, then there will be a presumption, that Christian purification or baptism is, like them, a sign of a spiritual change already experienced, or the means of producing such change: and this presumption will become a conclusive argument, if nothing is said in the New Testament to indicate that this new ceremony possessed a nature different from that of the ceremonies to which the first Christians had been accustomed. But if, on the other hand, it shall appear, that *in respect to a spiritual change*, these Jewish rites were neither signs that it had been experienced, nor means by which it was to be effected, but only emblems of general truth, then there will be a presumption that the Christian rite is not, *in respect to spiritual regeneration*, either a sign that this great change has been experienced, or a means by which it is to be effected, but simply an emblem thereof: and this probability will become a certainty, if we find that the New Testament does not convey any intimation that Christian baptism had an efficacy unlike that of all the Jewish rites, and was administered

in a manner wholly different from that in which these were administered; but that it coincides with the supposition, that their nature, their kind of efficacy, and their rules of performance, were essentially the same.

I. In the first place, as bearing the nearest resemblance to Christian baptism, we shall consider the ceremonial purifications of the Jews. In the nineteenth chapter of the book of Numbers, an account is given of the preparation made for these services, and the manner of their performance. After the mention of the case of a person touching a dead body, and some other cases of legal impurity, this general law is given at the seventeenth verse. "And for an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel: and a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave: and the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day: and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself with water, and shall be clean at even. But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation: because he hath defiled the sanctuary of the Lord, the water of separation hath not been sprinkled upon him, he is unclean." From the reference made to this service in the book of Ecclesiasticus, we learn that it was styled by the Jews a baptism. "What will he profit by his cleansing, who is baptized [purified,] from a dead body and again touches it."* From the statement of Philo,† and the epistle to the Hebrews, it appears, that this was a common mode of purification with water, at the time when Christian baptism or purification was instituted.

Now it should be considered, that there is not in this passage, nor in any passages referring to the ceremonial purifications of the Jews, the slightest indication that their baptisms were *signs* of spiritual purity, possessed by the person ceremonially purified. No reason can be assigned why the person ceremonially purified, should be first spiritually purified. The uncleanness referred to in the law, is ceremonial and not moral: the disadvantage of its continuance and the advantage of its removal, were civil rather than religious. The most upright and pious, might, through inadvertence, disease, or family affliction, become ceremonially impure, and be consequently excluded from social and religious intercourse with others. And the most profligate and impious might be ceremonially pure, and therefore lawfully present in all social and religious assemblies. The ceremonial laws of the Jews had respect

* Βαπτιζόμενος ἀπὸ νεκροῦ, καὶ πάλιν ἀπτόμενος αὐτοῦ, τί ὠφέλησε τῷ λουτρῷ αὐτοῦ. 31. 25.

† Lib. de Sacrificantiis. Heb. ix. 13.

partly to the health of the people, and partly to their moral discipline. But they who observed all these laws might be wholly destitute of all goodness; while they who involuntarily violated them might be eminent for virtue and piety. It will not be pretended by any, that the persons who received Jewish baptisms were first purified in mind, as the condition of their being afterwards purified in body. The only cases in which examination was enjoined, previous to the administration of the rite, were those of bodily disease. A person applying to the priest for purification, professed by word or deed, that he was then free from the disease which had occasioned his impurity. He was carefully examined by the priest, that it might be known that his profession was true. His baptism was a sign of restored health; and, in general, baptism was a sign, that there had been ceremonial impurity, and that the occasion of this impurity was removed. Those who were proselytes to Judaism, being unclean, were purified with water on account of the condition of ceremonial impurity in which they had lived, the father and his sons being circumcised, and all the family being baptized according to the law.* But there is nothing in the smallest degree tending to show, that the baptized had any spiritual purity, of which, from the circumstances of its administration, baptism would be the sign. No profession of virtue, or piety, or faith, or conversion, was required as the condition of obtaining Jewish baptism. It was not ordered that the applicant should be questioned with regard to his religious knowledge or principles, nor was he subjected to any kind of trial, that priest or people might be satisfied that he attended to the ordinance in a right state of mind. The whole nation of the Jews was purified with water before the promulgation of the law from Mount Sinai; (Exod. xx.) and this purification is designated by the Jewish writers a baptism. Before this baptism they were ceremonially impure, and by it they were rendered ceremonially pure. But the statements of the sacred historian show, that, both before and afterwards, they were, with very few exceptions, deplorably wicked. A short time before they were purified with water, this account is given of them, "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots, and when we did eat bread to the full: for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."—Exod. xvi. 2, 3. It will not be pretended that these persons were ceremonially purified on account of their faith; or that this was a baptism of believers.

With as little reason can it be pretended, that the baptisms of the Jews were the means producing any preternatural change in their minds.

* Isa. lii. 1; Acts x. 28.

There was nothing in the sprinkling a person with pure water, or with water and blood, or with water and ashes, to awaken the expectation, that, by such services, the soul of man could be changed. There is not one passage which teaches, that by the purification of the body, the spirit was purified. The disadvantages of ceremonial impurity were thus removed; and this was all. The history of the Jews most clearly shows, that they received no spiritual purification from their baptisms. Shortly after the baptism of the nation before alluded to, and even while they were still at the foot of the burning mountain from which the law of God was delivered, priests and people became idolaters. Exod. xxxii. 7. Surely they were not regenerated by their baptism. In the epistle to the Hebrews we are told, that the various baptisms of the Jews were merely bodily services. *διαφόροις βαπτισμοῖς δικαιώμασι σαρκός.* ix. 10. Their consequences were corporeal, and not spiritual, they "made holy in respect to bodily purity."—v. 13. It is not once said of any Jewish baptism, that it tended by any inherent or preternatural virtue to make men good. There is no promise of any blessing in connexion with the observance of these rites, save such as was connected equally with obedience to all the commands of God. There is not a single instance in which wisdom, virtue, or piety, are attributed to baptism, or in which they appear to have in any degree resulted from it. This evidence is amply sufficient to justify the firm and universal conviction, that the baptisms of the Jews were neither signs of possessing, nor means of producing, spiritual purity.

A rite of external purification, performed as a religious service, would naturally be regarded as in some way a sign of spiritual purification. It might be either the sign of a fact, or of a doctrine. The latter signification, being the more general, would be the more likely to be true, if nothing were known of the circumstances of its performance; but these leave no room for doubt with regard to the meaning of Jewish baptisms. Rites of external purification applied, not occasionally, but commonly, to those who were not spiritually purified, antecedently or subsequently, could only admit of a general interpretation. They must be *emblems*, general symbols for spiritual purity. When the psalmist prayed for spiritual purity, he spoke of it in figurative language, which clearly shows that the ceremonial purification of the body, was an emblem of the moral purification of the soul. "Purify me with hyssop and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."—Ps. li. 7. The same connexion is manifested by the exhortation of the prophet. "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well."—Is. i. 16. It also occurs in the prediction, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean, from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you."—Ez. xxxvi. 25. It is

universally acknowledged, that the baptisms of the Jews were emblems of the purifying of the soul. Such rites have always been thus regarded, by heathens, as well by Jews and Christians. No verbal explanation of their meaning could be necessary. That which the character of the rite would at once suggest, to which the usage of the rite was adapted, and which coincides with the language of the Holy Scriptures, must be its true meaning. The baptisms or purifications of the body with water observed by the Jews, were *emblems* of the baptism or purification of the soul.

We conclude, therefore, that the Jewish rites of purification, by them called baptisms, were not signs of a faith or purity of mind before existing, but of past ceremonial impurity, and of present external connexion with the people of God. They were means of changing, not the moral nature, but the social condition of men. The evil from which they delivered was a separation from the society of Jews, which was the consequence of sickness, as well as of sin. The good they conferred was an admission to the external privileges, civil and religious, of the Jewish nation, which were possessed by the wicked, as well as by the righteous. Though emblematical of spiritual purity, and designed to inculcate it, they were not commonly connected with it. The leper whose abode was far removed from the abodes of his fellow men, and who, when he came near them, was required to cry out, "Unclean, unclean," might be in the possession and enjoyment of the highest spiritual privileges of the people of God. And they who most strictly observed all the regulations of the ceremonial law, might be altogether destitute of every spiritual good. It was to men who were baptized whenever they came from places of public resort, that our Lord said, "Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which, indeed, appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."—Matt. xxiii. 27 ; Mark vii. 4.

(To be Continued.)

REV. R. W. HAMILTON, ON THE QUESTION, SHOULD SHAKESPEARE BE READ BY THE CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR?

MR. EDITOR,—Your correspondent, Philalethes, can owe no apology to me for the freest examination of any sentiment which I have ventured to publish. He has the right to canvass every such sentiment most rigidly; and never will he find on my part the slightest wish to interfere with its exercise. There might be some instances, in his protest against my views, as to which it would not be difficult to prove just grounds of complaint. "Without passing any opinion upon these essays," remarks your correspondent, in referring to a

recent publication of mine, "or whether or not they are of a kind on which a Christian minister may be most properly employed." Now, is not this ungracious, as well as sinister reproof? and what impression can it fail to leave, whatever was its intention, on the minds of your readers? The greater number of these must be ignorant of my habits, except they should now adopt this insinuation—that I am so little addicted to the business of my ministry, so little possessed of its spirit, that I create a superabundant leisure; and that, when I work at all, I devote my attention to indifferent and alien studies. Might he not have learnt from my neighbours, my brethren in office, and perhaps from other sources, to say nothing of the assertions contained in the work itself, that it is only in "spare moments" that I *can* be thus employed, that my sacred duties are not executed in a very narrow limit, or in a very perfunctory manner? He has "compelled me!" If the observation be meant in kindness, so I will accept it: it seems to me to partake too much of the sneer.

Nor is it quite generous to attack me "where he is sure of carrying the sympathies of very many along with him." He is certainly strong in what appears to me a too common prejudice against general literature. This exists, I must be suffered to think, in the bosoms of some of the most amiable and devoted Christians. He will find other allies. He occupies a most popular position. I am not blind to his advantage. It is easy for him to make out a prepossessing case. In contesting the point with him, I could only hope to succeed by reasoning, not by inuendo and appeal to the fears of ignorance; clamour carries the many, a generalization can only be appreciated by the few.

There seems also a banter in this respondent, which looks to me as somewhat personally unkind: "He must not fancy that other less gifted mortals," &c. But I check myself, and will address my attention to a few points of the question,—the whole of the question I do not pretend to discuss.

You need not be reminded, that a vast system of letters is involved in a classical and accomplished education. Some have wished to proscribe the authors of Greece and Rome; others have advised a very narrow range of all imaginative composition. None who were versed in this erudition have hitherto carried out the plan of excision or abridgement; from the rest the counsel comes with little weight. Am I alone to blame? Are Homer, Anacreon, Virgil, Horace, Juvenal,—the ancient tragedians; or Aristophanes, with Plautus and Terence, branded with shame, and abandoned to silence, in our schools and colleges? I go along with the system, and believe it to be, on the whole, most favourable to Christianity. The extinction of such a literature would be far more evil than any injury now incident to its cultivation. Who can be the well-read English scholar, and be igno-

rant of Shakspeare? This is not a condition which I implore: it is a universally admitted requirement. We might as properly speak of the thorough Grecian who had never read the Mæonian bard.

It has appeared to me, always surrounded as I have been with persons of elegant tastes and literary pursuits, that the most proper course to be taken was, how these qualities might be regulated, without being destroyed. Placed at the centre of some influence, it has been my earnest aim to hallow polite learning. The responsibility was rather forced upon me, than freely selected. I was compelled to read, had there been no readiness in my bent of mind, to direct others. My reprover will allow that I knew best my circumstances; and let me beg him to give me credit that, with much infirmity, I have striven to be the good minister of Jesus Christ. The proof has not been withheld me, that it was more useful to shape these studies than to interdict them. Let him observe how I have guarded the young against the dangers of this order, even to reiteration. If this work should find its way into the circles of worldly men, I must lay my account for the severest censures upon the fanaticism of my cautions and exceptions.

Nowhere have I recommended *all* to read Shakspeare; nowhere have I advocated his full and indiscriminate perusal. My address was to literary persons. To them it was indeed said, "He must be read: he ought to be read." I do repeat it, by this class he must, he ought. But there are tens of thousands whose place in life does not require, and scarcely admits of, this knowledge. Surely it is to wrest "the author's end," to represent him making proclamation of this as a general behest, a very ministerial dictate to the promiscuous youth of his charge!

The question is, should Shakspeare be read by the Christian scholar or not? My censor read him "in days gone by." Does he do all he can to forget him? Does he never quote him? It surely is hard to debar others from his acquisition. Would he think a public library complete without these dramas? Would he so estimate his own? *Somehow or other*, all are acquainted with "the bard;" and this certainly qualifies those who unequivocally denounce him!

It must be left in debate between me and Philaethes, whether my encomiums on Shakspeare tend to the encouragement of theatrical exhibitions. Honestly, it is my conviction that they have no such tendency. He cannot be acted. No one who has conceived him could recognize that conception in the mimic scene. The ideal is made grotesque and absurd. In every case, by the most solemn warning, have I, for more than twenty-seven years, pleaded and expostulated with the people of whom I have held so long an oversight, against this soul-destroying amusement.

The mere design of an author to adapt his productions for the stage, will not necessarily condemn them. They are *generally* unworthy of being read, if they were only contrived to be acted. But often they have failed to be admired when acted, just because of their excellence. *Comus* was composed by Milton to be played at Ludlow Castle: is it likely to please the theatrical audience, save as patched out by spectacle and pageant? Yet what Christian declines to read that masque? Who has not read the "Remorse" of Coleridge?

The correspondent who has thus animadverted upon me, says, in conclusion, "Far be from us the day when our religious professors will be of a stamp to *seek solace* in Shakspeare." The italics are mine. Is this reasonable deprecation? Is it fair dealing? The reader might suppose that I substituted Shakspeare for Sibbs. He proceeds: "Or our youth, bold with the sanction of Christian ministers, shall plunge headlong into the witcheries and wonders of that wonderful man." It is an undeserved fling. Let it pass. I have not said more in eulogy of "this wonderful man" than this high-wrought phrase. Will it not tempt "our youth" to examine this marvellous store for themselves? Philalethes should be very cautious to be quite consistent. To prevent youth from "plunging headlong," I wrote the essays which he assails.

Another sentence or two, and I will close. What I do, I do openly. When I speak of Shakspeare, I do not affect scarcely the most casual glance at his pages. I do not keep him in some study-crypt, or behind a towering frontage of folios. I do not congratulate myself that I became acquainted with him of yore, though of course one would not now begin to form that acquaintance! I read Euripides still. I read Seneca still. And sometimes I dip into Shakspeare. I doubt, however, whether Philalethes has not spent more time and pains upon him than myself.

Let me seriously ask the gentleman—I have not a guess of the anonymer—who has thus publicly rebuked me, whose name must stand out to all, whether he has not treated me harshly? To say the least, has he not egregiously mistaken the purport of my dissertations? Must not his censures induce an impression of my tastes and habits unfavourable to the simplicity of my ministerial aims? He may suppose that the Christian pastor should offer no contribution to literature. He may claim the perfect liberty so to think. If he should, however, change that opinion, and send forth a work of even such humble claims as mine, let *him* make it as truly religious in its bearing and spirit, as strongly avowed that it comes from a dissenting minister, as thoroughly imbued with an uncompromising evangelism,—and then, perhaps, he will be as well employed as in arraigning the honest endeavours of those who, according to their best judgment and warmest zeal, "seek the things of Jesus Christ."

Are these the times in which appeals of this kind should be made to our churches? Should we not do our utmost to advance the education of our ministry? There is no small number of persons, even in our community, who look upon the recommendations of any species of learning with distrust. They are not fully disabused of the cant which calls meagreness, simplicity; and coarseness, fidelity. I hope my replicant has no sympathy with this class; but he may be satisfied that he has gained their favour. You, Mr. Editor, and your excellent Magazine, will never, I am assured, pander to these vulgar conceits and senseless prejudices.

RICHARD WINTER HAMILTON.

Leeds, March 9, 1842.

SCRIPTURAL TESTS OF A VALID MINISTRY APPLIED TO THE EPISCOPAL CLERGY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

DEAR SIR,—Your periodical has repeatedly borne witness against the present claims of the clergy of the Church of England to be the only ministers of Christ in this land, at least, to the exclusion of all Protestant sects. Your last January number contained an article which, in a dignified and Christian spirit, and with unanswerable force of argument, nobly vindicated the validity and order of the Congregational ministry, and showed, moreover, what a variety and strength of proof would be necessary to support the lofty and exclusive pretensions now put forth by the national clergy. Standing on their episcopal ordination and alleged apostolic descent, the latter assert that they alone have any right to preach the Gospel, or to administer the Christian sacraments, and that, whatever is done in these offices by others, not ordained after this manner, is not only without the least efficacy, but a sinful and presumptuous interference with things sacred. Thus, unceremoniously, do they set aside the ministry of all Independents, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists, and of every portion of the Christian church throughout the world, not favoured with a ministry episcopally ordained.

But, if these assertions are founded in truth, the *excellence* and *efficiency* of a ministry, alone sanctioned and approved by heaven, must, of course, be obvious to all. If it has not these attributes, common sense will decide that its claim of exclusive authority and privilege, is worth no more than its weight in words. And as the inquiry, how far it possesses these attributes, will, probably, less task the attention and judgment of plain and humble readers, than the process of reasoning pursued in the admirable article referred to, and, as many of this class are found among the readers of your Magazine, I will, with your permission, Mr. Editor, submit a few pages for their perusal.

So to deal with the pretensions in question is, indeed, only applying the text recommended by our Lord, Matt. vii. 15—20. When he taught the multitude how to distinguish true from false teachers of religion, he did not instruct them to inquire whether or not they had been episcopally ordained, or were in the apostolic succession, or had been rightly commissioned, or sent, but whether or not they were men of the right sort, as to character; in a word, whether their spirit and doings accorded with their professions. "*By their fruits shall ye know them.*"

By this test, then, or, at least, the spirit of it, let us try the pretensions of the clergy of the Church of England. For if they are, indeed, the only persons in this land, whom God has entrusted with preaching the Gospel, and administering the sacraments, it must be because they are eminently qualified for this office above all other men, are best adapted, by their moral and intellectual endowments, to promote the great ends of the office; since it would be an insult to the wisdom of God to suppose that He had not chosen for this office the men who are best fitted for it, or, that He would deny the office to any who are better qualified than the persons actually filling it. This view of the subject may be illustrated by three or four propositions.

I. To be consistent with their exclusive pretensions, the clergy of the Church of England should be eminently qualified for their office by their *spirit and life*, and the *fidelity and excellence* of their *teaching*.

1. By their *spirit and life*. If we wish to know what these should be, to render them agreeable to what God requires in ministers of the Gospel, we must consult the Scriptures. To the church at Rome, St. Paul said, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." But if this be obligatory on private Christians, how much more so on ministers! For the same apostle says, to a youthful member of this class, "Be thou an *example* of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." And warning him against those who were eager for this world, and thirsting for its riches, the apostle adds, "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life;" (1 Tim. iv. 12; vi. 11, 12,) meaning, of course, that to be anxious for aught else, was utterly alien from the spirit of his vocation.

Let truth and justice, then, nay, let charity herself, answer the question—whether all this is eminently realized in the clergy of the Establishment, whether in these things they are remarkably exemplary above the ministers of other communions? Here and there one, among so

many thousands, may be found thus separate from the world and consecrated to God, and whom, in all the graces of true piety, it would be an honour to equal, or even resemble; but take them as a body, and so far are they from this apostolic standard, that it will be a happy day for England, and for themselves too, when they shall make but a respectable approach to it. Let the lists of those who have qualified themselves under the game laws, of the patrons of the card-table, the ball room, the race-course, not to mention other forms of worldly pleasure, bear witness to the truth of this sentiment.

2. By the *fidelity* and *excellence* of their *teaching*. The bearing of this on the point in question is manifest. For if the Established clergy alone are authorized to preach the Gospel, we may justly expect that they will be distinguished for sound doctrine, for fidelity in teaching and enforcing it, and for such a style and manner of speaking as must be best calculated to gain the attention and make an impression on the understanding and hearts of the community; in a word, that they will have a clear and accurate knowledge of the grand peculiarities of the Gospel, and a zealous, admirable, and happy method of commending them to the minds and consciences of others.

How does fact, then, accord with this representation? Alas! when weighed in the balance, they are found not merely wanting, but most deplorably so. Over extensive districts of this country, an evangelical clergyman, as he is called, who in the Church of England faithfully preaches the Gospel, is an absolute rarity; and, although the number of this class has of late greatly increased, they still form a small minority among their brethren, while the great mass of the clergy are silent on the awakening and life-giving doctrines of the apostles, and strangers to them. Often, indeed, when the defective theology of the clergy is arraigned, we are reminded, in refutation of the charge, of the Scriptural character of the *Articles* of the national church. But of what use are the most orthodox articles, if the generality of the clergy neither believe nor preach them? And, with a few splendid exceptions, their *manner* is scarcely better than the matter of their teaching, so cold and passionless is it. Without exaggeration, it may be said, that both the doctrine and style of preaching prevalent in the Establishment are about the last which a wise man, anxious to imbue the nation with the saving truths and spirit of the Gospel, would think of adopting.

II. If the clergy of the Church of England alone are authorized to administer the sacraments, and the sacraments, as administered by others, have no efficacy, and fail of their end, we may justly expect to see *very different results from their administration* of them, than from that of others.

1. With respect to *baptism*. They tell us either that baptism is regeneration, or that regeneration always takes place in baptism as

administered by them. If so, then, we have a right to expect that all the children baptized by them grow up from their infancy in innocence and purity, and exhibit, by their decided piety and virtue, the most convincing proofs that they are indeed "children of God, members of Christ, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven." While, on the other hand, we should expect to see those children, whose unhappiness it is to have been baptized by other ministers, rising up, from the first dawn of understanding and volition, in impiety and vice, and exhibiting all the marks of the seed of the wicked one. But when we look on the children of church people and those of dissenters, it is difficult to perceive the superiority of the former. In all that relates to propriety of conduct and indications of piety, the latter are, at least, the equals of the former.

2. With respect to *the Lord's supper*. It was intended to nourish the faith, and to strengthen the peace and holiness of those who rightly receive it. It might be supposed, then, that the most superficial observer would be able to detect a mighty difference between the spiritual advantages of those who receive this sacrament at the hands of the clergy, and those of the persons who are so unfortunate as to receive it at the hands of any other ministers; that the former, every time they receive it, would make a fresh and extraordinary advance in the comfort and purity of the Gospel, while the latter were left utterly impoverished and comfortless, or visited with some providential chastisement for presuming to receive so sacred a thing from an unauthorized and unhallowed dispenser of it. But we look in vain for this difference; yet, alas! we do not fail to see and hear of numbers departing from the altars of the Church of England as unsanctified and worldly as they approached.

III. If the national clergy are the only authorized and qualified ministers of the Gospel, it may be expected that those who attend their ministry will be more *intelligent, holy, and zealous Christians*, than those who do not enjoy its advantages.

The end of preaching the Gospel is to make men enlightened, sincere, and devoted Christians. We are entitled to expect, then, if the clergy possess the only warrant to preach the Gospel, that the attendants at the Church of England will better understand the Gospel, and better exemplify its spirit and precepts, and be more zealous for its diffusion, and more separate from the vanities of the world, and more exact and faithful in discharging all the duties of life, than those who worship elsewhere; and that the latter would be remarkable for their ignorance, irreligion, and immorality. But fact disappoints the expectation. If there is one portion of the community more industrious, sober, and moral than another, it is the dissenting portion. The inmates of our gaols and prisons have sometimes been classified, and it is surprising to see how few of them were dissenters. And if

we would look for an intelligent acquaintance with the peculiar doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, it is equally notorious and melancholy how little of it is to be found in the large majority of church people. And whatever zeal and liberality for Scriptural education at home, or the diffusion of the Gospel abroad, any of these may now be showing, be their motives more or less pure, it is undeniable that they did not awake to this duty, till aroused by the zeal and efforts of dissenters. And as to abstinence from worldly pleasures, had it not been for the patronage of church people, they would ere now have become nearly obsolete; and, to the credit of dissenters, it has, I think, been generally cast upon them as a reproach by their neighbours, that they are too narrow-minded and rigid in their notions of moral propriety to indulge much in the gaieties of others.

IV. If the clergy of the Church of England are the only ministers of the Gospel whom God acknowledges and honours, it is plain that those who are *intruders* into this office *cannot be expected ever to do any good*; that is, to be useful *as ministers*.

There is no possibility of succeeding in this ministry without the special influences of the Spirit of God. Men may preach the Gospel for ever, and adopt whatever means they please for the conversion of their fellow-men, but, without this blessing, all their labour will be in vain. And God will assuredly withhold his blessing from those who presume to preach in opposition to his will.

HAS God, then, withheld his blessing from the ministry of all in this land but those within the pale of the Church of England? Happily, this is a question not difficult to answer. If we look at home, we can point to a mighty host, who have been "brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God," by the ministry of dissenters. What, indeed, would have been the moral condition of England at this day, had it not been for their zealous and self-denying labours? About a century ago, the population of this country was covered with almost incredible darkness on the grand facts of the Gospel revelation, and steeped in corresponding worldliness and immorality, so fearfully had the many thousands of the national clergy come short of the only end of their appointment; and in this condition it might have continued to this hour, if another ministry had not arisen to arouse and enlighten it. If the Spirit of God has rested with special unction any where, it has been on the labours of men whose ministry has not been recognized by the national clergy.

And when we look abroad, we see the same gracious testimony vouchsafed to their labours. In missions to the heathen, in efforts to evangelize the most barbarous and savage tribes, they have been eminently successful. But if the clergy of the Church of England had alone authority to undertake this work of mercy, God would have frowned upon the intruders for intermeddling with it, and denied

them his aid and countenance. But the Church of England was neither the first to enter upon it, nor, considering the vast amplitude and variety of her means, has she been the most honoured in it. The West India islands, South Africa, the South Sea islands, India, China, and other portions of the globe, bear witness to the honour which God has put on the ministry of Baptists, Wesleyans, Independents, and Presbyterians. And I rejoice to know, that the Church Missionary Society can point to New Zealand, India, and other places, where her agents have been honoured also. And we must not forget Tinevelly, where, perhaps, more than in any of her stations in the whole of Hindostan, her efforts have been crowned with success. But it is instructive to mark who was the missionary chiefly instrumental of that success. It was Rhenius, a Lutheran, who had none but Presbyterian ordination, and whose services that Society engaged, while the present lofty pretensions of the English clergy were unknown, or confined to a comparatively small number.

In short, with such characteristics as have thus been shown to belong to the ministry of the national clergy in general, its *really* possessing an exclusive title to the attention and reverence of the people of this land, would be one of the greatest shocks to common sense, one of the severest trials to an enlightened and rational faith, one of the greatest mysteries in the moral government of God, which the world ever presented.

F.

March 7th, 1842.

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHÆA.

"He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus, and laid it in his own new tomb."—MATT. xxvii. 58, 60.

Precious burthen, see him bearing,
Body of his bleeding Lord,
Ev'ry look, in anguish sharing,
Tho' he utters not a word;
See! the starting tear appearing,
Calvary's scene of blood deplored.

Mark his silent grief—lamenting,
That dear body, wounded, torn,
Spear, and nails, deep wounds indenting,
And the lacerating thorn;
How he grieves; man's unrelenting,
Suff'ring, death, his Lord hath borne.

Silently, with heart o'erflowing,
With emotion sad deprest,
All his thoughts on him bestowing,
Borne to his own tomb to rest;
Dearest, last affection showing,
Sacred act:—Disciple blest.

Bound with linen cloth consigning,
Christ's remains, with pious care,
"Holy trust, be mine resigning;"
Breathes he then a secret prayer;
Ne'er did sepulchre confining,
Hold such costly relics rare.

Thus entombed; behold him bending,
O'er his Saviour's loved remains,
Anxious fear, love, hope, contending,
These his ling'ring step detains;
Rolled the stone:—Ah! see him wending,
Spirit bow'd, whom Heaven sustains.

Peckham.

J. S. HARDY.

THE ADVENT.

Among innumerable worlds
 There moved a little star,
 Sin had shadowed o'er its light
 That dew-like on the web of night
 Gleamed tremulously far ;—
 To that a God came down,
 Quenching his Godhead's crown,
 Wrapping life-giving light in mean mortality.

When sang the morning stars
 The infant skies among,
 Watching old Chaos flung away
 From the lifted eyes of new-born Day,
 Heaven shook to the loud song ;
 But when a Saviour's birth
 Was heralded on earth,
 Up rose a thrilling hymn piercing Eternity.

Over the shadowy plain,
 Startling abstracted Night,
 It swept,—the mercy-singing choir
 Woke echoes never to expire,
 (Endless as heaven's own light,)
 Echoes of hope that smiled
 Upon man sin-defiled,
 And rose through all the earth at that strange melody.

Rapt prophets through past time
 Had sighed that hour to see,
 Perhaps their spirits sang the song
 That scared the timorous shepherd throng,
 And sounded distantly
 E'en where the city slept,
 And the child Jesus wept
 The first unconscious tears of his humility.

There is a stream that flows—
 That flowed ere Time began,
 Gladdening God's city,—and for ever
 The waves of this undying river
 Murmur " Good will to man,"
 And sitting on its shore
 Angels sing evermore
 How the Eternal Mind dwelt with humanity.

When weary time goes down
 Behind Oblivion's sea,
 And hides his grey forsaken head,
 Trembling at the coming tread
 Of young Eternity,
 That song of joy shall sound
 Heaven's echoing confines round
 Making of love divine a deathless memory.

REVIEWS.

The Theology of the Early Christian Church, exhibited in Quotations from the Writers of the First Three Centuries. By James Bennett, D.D. The Congregational Lecture for 1841. Eighth Series. 8vo. London: Jackson & Walford.

"THE Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints; from his right hand went a fiery law!" Such was the scene witnessed by the recorder of it, at the head of two millions of people, in a region of high and frowning precipices, whose summits, first clothed with the thickest darkness, then glowed with vivid lightnings like a burning fiery furnace, from whence a voice was heard, distinct from the inarticulate sounds of the tremendous phenomena which solemnized the occasion—the voice of words. It was the great Author of nature, throwing a heightened sublimity over a part of his own creation, by some new and extraordinary tokens of his presence. It was the voice of God, proclaiming his will to a race isolated by dreary deserts from the other large families of mankind, and giving, through the mediation of their leader, the elements of that religious and civil constitution, under which, upon Sharon's plain, by Jordan's stream, among the vineyards of Heshbon, and in the city "beautiful for situation," they, or their posterity, were afterwards to live. To the communications engraven on the tables of stone, written in the book of the law, and amplified in succeeding ages by inspired judges, psalmists, and prophets, the attention of the people thus favoured with a precious freight of Divine truth was repeatedly and impressively called. They were to hearken, to observe, and do, on pain of blasting upon their fields, murrain among their cattle, pestilence in their homes, and an enemy within their borders. They were to be as conscious of the verities of heavenly birth, as though the hand and brow of each Jew, together with the gates of his city and the posts of his house, bore their imprint. The fathers to the children were to make them known. They were not to subtract or to multiply, in relation to the oracles of God. There was the risk of a penalty in either case, of which a fearful sample was afforded in the instance of the men of Bethshemesh, who presumed to tamper with sacred things. From the day when Moses declared on the skirts of the wilderness, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you," to the period when Malachi closed the canon of the Old Testament, with the threatening against the despising

of it, "lest I come and smite the earth with a curse,"—through the whole of that interval, there runs a chain of warnings and promises, given through the medium of inspired men, which, like the line that was drawn around Sinai to keep the people from touching it, was intended to preserve the Divine law in its integrity, unabridged, unextended, and free from all foreign admixtures. But human nature in its native condition is an upstart thing—wilful and heady as a wild ass's colt—as impatient of moral and intellectual restraint as that desert rover is of bit and bridle. It accords with the pride of unhumiliated men, to seem wiser than what is written. It suits the taste of unsanctified men, to have attention diverted from moral precepts, and their authority lowered, by setting up a series of carnal ordinances, no matter how intricate, as of equal or superior obligation. These are demands made by the depraved appetite of our nature, sharpened by the subtlety of its unsleeping spiritual foe; and they were met to the full in the case of the Jews. The mysterious disappearance of their lawgiver for forty days, when no sign was given from the gloom and silence of the mountain that he lived, an event which led to such disastrous consequences to the people assembled at its base, was deemed a lucky occurrence by their meddling, proud, and profane successors. That he must have been somewhere during the interval was undeniable, and though the next inference was not so clear, yet, as it answered a desired purpose, it was adopted; and hence that chasm in his history was filled up by the figment, that he was busily employed in constructing an oral law—an interpretation of the written one, and an expansion of it by supplemental matter. The addenda was handed down by word of mouth. A route was easily devised for it along the course of time, and though its passage is not traced step by step, yet a descent is made out, which, for unbroken continuity and historic proof, may challenge comparison with the apostolic succession of a more modern period. The oral law passed from Joshua to the elders; then to the prophets; then to the men of the great synagogue: on it went to Joshua ben Perachiah, Judah ben Tabbai, and Simeon ben Shatah. Afterwards its pathway lay by the feet of Gamaliel. At length, after a restless pilgrimage of two thousand years, it reached the ear of the great-grandson of the latter, Rabbi Judah Hakkodesh, who arrested its progress, and imprisoned the fugitive, in his famous work, the Mishna. Such was the origin and course of tradition in the ancient church; at first a small nebulosity, but increased in bulk as ages fled away, by the constant accretion of materials given off from this lower world, until it covered the whole heaven to the Jews, and completely intercepted the Divine light that arose to shine upon them in the terrible wilderness.

It is remarkable, that precisely similar treatment to that which the Divine law experienced in the instance to which we have been referring,

the code of an impostor has received. We meddle not with the question, still a vexed one in Islamism, whether the written law of the prophet was his own production, or whether it was penned with a sunbeam before the throne of Allah on the table of his everlasting decrees, and brought down from heaven by the angel Gabriel to be transcribed. Let us merely glance at the treatment dealt out to the document when in the keeping of man. The Koran is the foundation of faith and morals to the Mussulmen; but when the religion based upon it spread out of the desert, and extended its victorious banners from the Columns of Hercules to the Ganges, the caliphs soon found it inconvenient to govern simply by its maxims. Some of its precepts, too, were personally objectionable, particularly that which forbade the use of wine to the faithful, and which, without a gloss, must of course have been regarded as an interdict upon all strong drink. To meet the emergency, recourse was had to an oral law. It was recollected that Mohammed, simple and severe in some of his habits, had no objection to "black eyes and lemonade;" and that while the maximum number of wives allotted to his followers amounted to four, he himself had possessed seventeen. It was deemed reasonable to suppose, that these ladies, in chit-chat with the Prophet, must have gained many sentiments from him not found in the Koranic code; and equally reasonable to think, that, however prudent and reserved some of them might be, in relation to the free utterances of his mind, the whole seventeen would not be proof against the temptation to whisper and tell tales. Accordingly, from presumed conversations with the matronly Kadijah, the more youthful Ayesha, and the rest, together with others of his friends and cotemporaries, the first caliphs soon gathered together a vast body of *Sunneh*, or oral law, which smoothed some of the rough places in the written volume, and added to it an entirely new set of regulations, to be used as occasion might require. When emerging from their arid domains in the desert, the fertile regions of Syria and the Lesser Asia were conquered, a taste for luxuries, unknown before, was acquired, which rendered the severity of ancient habits a galling bondage. Some of the commentators upon the written law from the oral soon removed the difficulty, by relaxing the interdict upon wine, so as to admit of its moderate use, tradition reporting that the Prophet once spoke in its praise, which, in connexion with an indirect compliment to it in another place in the Koran, was held to strip the precept of the force of a positive prohibition. Thus the far-famed wine-cellar of Shah Abbas, and the odes of Hafiz on the grapes of Shiraz, became orthodox. A larger body of commentators, however, agreed, guided by traditional authorities, in teaching the non-observance of the spirit of the law, if the letter be adhered to; and hence, because wine alone is mentioned with apparent disfavour, a man abstaining from it may be a drunkard on rakee, without losing caste as a faithful follower of the

Prophet. In fact, in various respects, Mohammedanism is corrupted in the *Sunneh*, in much the same manner as Judaism is perverted in the *Talmud*.

It is painful to reflect that the foundation of Christian faith and morals has thus been tampered with. Our Lord, while on the earth, gave his sanction to the ancient inspired writings, by quoting from them, and by declaring that he "came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil." When in the upper sanctuary again, he sent the Spirit of Truth upon evangelists and apostles in copious dispensations, enabling them to write with exactness upon the things they had seen, heard, and handled, of the Word of Life. The canon of the New Testament closes with an anathema like the Old. It is directed against those who profanely increase or diminish its code. Just as inspiration was about to leave the world, having completed the sum of the Divine announcements—as the pen was dropping from the hand of the last surviving apostle, having recorded the scenes beheld in vision, with which the great drama of terrestrial life will end—the mandate was issued, enforced by a curse, warning off mankind from the attempt either to add to, or to take away from, things revealed. But human presumption blenched not at the sharp sword that was unsheathed to keep inviolate the territory of Divine truth. It went to work to join together what God had put asunder—the expressions of the Eternal mind and the devices of the human heart. Conceited men, clinging to some early-imbibed or favourite opinion, the offspring of their own brain, or a graft from the philosophy of paganism—ambitious men, fond of strutting in striped canonicals, amid the bows and scrapings of a servile crowd, taught to reverence the triple ministerial order as installed in the throne of the blessed Trinity—superstitious men, having a conscience to be eased of a burden, and anxious to get it done on the cheapest terms, through some ceremonial observance: these were at fault for an authority, in behalf of their respective schemes, in the Scriptures, and therefore contrived a false one to serve their purpose. This was a *lex non scripta*. The unwritten sentiments of the apostles. The seeds of truth, not sown by them in their public documents, but scattered in ordinary conversation, retained in the minds of their followers, and communicated in a similar manner to their successors. It would undoubtedly be the case that the apostles gave much oral instruction to their followers, in the interval between their conversion, and their final ejaculation at their martyrdom. It was to writing, however, that they committed the rule of faith and practice, embracing the whole counsel of God, and expressly for the purpose of guarding it against those corruptions to which instruction orally transmitted is liable. The crime committed by the early traditionists, lay not so much in reporting certain truths to have been verbally received from the apostles, for it might have been the fact, and the means were at

hand of ascertaining whether it was so, by comparing the verbal with the written word. The grand evil was that of assuming a hear-say mode of communication to be a legitimate channel for the transmission of Divine truth, independent of the Scriptures—that of receiving the dogmata thus conveyed as of authority in themselves—that of supposing there to be something lacking in the written revelation, which was in this way to be supplied. It was constructing a machine for the speedy manufacture of men's whims, and the objects of their wishes, into staple articles of apostolic production. It was committing the very sin upon which the Apocalypse passes its solemn sentence. It was provoking the threatened erasure from the Book of Life, through offering the premised insult to the Book of Light!

The moral and political consequences to the Jews, of adopting the oral law, and interpreting the written one by it, are now matters of history. Following that spark of their own kindling, it involved them in the meshes of a net of practical error, and bewildered them, as a nation, to their undoing. The effect of the traditions of the elders was to make void the commandments of God, by perverting their meaning, lessening their force, contracting their application, or nullifying their spirit. A familiar instance of this is recorded in the gospels, in the gloss put upon the fifth command in the decalogue. The law said "Honour thy father and thy mother," obviously implying the obligation of the child, in the possession of ample means, to contribute to the support of his parents when in poorer circumstances. But the tradition made this void, and warranted children to leave their parents unaided upon the troubled waters of this world's pauperism, upon the plea that the overplus of their estate was a gift to God. In this manner the Divine precepts were wrested from their obvious meaning, or thrown into complete obscurity by the prominence given to a multitude of unauthorised and trifling observances, until the washing of the hands superseded the cleansing of the heart, and outward ceremonies supplanted spiritual piety, and were allowed to exonerate a proficient in them from the great duties of morality. It would be difficult to find in the whole range of history, a picture of more enormous wickedness, certainly not of cooler villainy, than that which the portrait of the Pharisees exhibits in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew—a chapter which we advise all sticklers for a religion in which forms and ceremonies shall preponderate, and human tradition have high place, carefully to read. They were sometimes saying right, but never doing it—binding heavy burdens upon men's shoulders, and shirking every load themselves—severe in their exactions to others, but self-indulgent, to licentiousness—doing all their works that they might be seen of men—fond of greetings in markets, chief seats in synagogues, and uppermost rooms at feasts—emblazoning the piety wanting in the heart, upon broad phylacteries worn upon their brows—devouring widows' houses

—making long prayers as a pretence to conceal their sins—shutting up the kingdom of heaven, neither going in themselves, nor suffering others to enter, through their corrupt practice and teaching—exciting men to swear by the gold of the temple, and then taxing them as debtors—compassing sea and land to make a proselyte, and then, through their insolent bearing to the Gentile convert as an inferior, making him two-fold more the child of hell than themselves—paying tithe of mint, and anise, and cumming, and omitting the weightier matters of judgment, mercy, and faith—straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel—honouring the tombs of the prophets, and persecuting their living successors—appearing outwardly righteous unto men, but within, full of hypocrisy and iniquity—whited walls, and painted sepulchres! Such are some outlines of the character and conduct that were formed through departing from the word of the Lord; and well might He, who was meek and lowly in heart, have indignation stirred within him as he contemplated the picture, and as if losing all forbearance, utter the sharpest sentence that ever came from his lips—“Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” But we have not yet surveyed the whole extent of the wickedness engendered, and the evils incurred, by a people refusing heaven’s guidance, and walking according to the light of their own eyes and the imagination of their own hearts. The false construction put upon ancient prophecy by the fancies of the Jewish doctors, originated the notion of Messiah coming in power and state to establish a temporal sovereignty, and led to that exasperation against Christ, on account of the poverty of his appearance, which particularly marked the ecclesiastical authorities of his day, and which issued in these keepers of tradition branding him as an impostor, and crucifying him for blasphemy. Thus, a nation, whose founder was the friend of God, imbrued their hands in the blood of his Son—a nation favoured with a Divine code of laws which was expressly adapted to cause “Israel to grow as the lily,” became, through the desertion of it, like a desert and arid plain, in which neither tree nor herb can flourish; or like one of naked, bleak, and desolate crags, and dark chasms, where scorpions nestle, and serpents hiss, through adopting the inventions of the human carnal mind to regulate their movements: and ultimately the nation perished by the judgment of God, without a single redeeming virtue, if we except the Roman one of courage, which was more brute endurance and ferocity, than heroism.

The scene is not a shade less dark, presented to our view in more recent times, when the masses within the pale of Christendom bowed down to an authority independent of the written word, as a divinely sanctioned adjunct to it, and its sole interpreter. It may admit of controversy, who was the first aggressor against the sufficiency of the Scriptures in the Christian church, and when the first aggression was

made. Dr. Bennett observes that the heretics first appealed to tradition. We demur to this conclusion, and are inclined to think that the orthodox themselves were, unconsciously on their part, the authors of that mighty evil, which afterwards "ate as doth a canker," until scarcely a remnant of primitive truth remained. Nothing would be more natural, than for the first converts after the decease of the apostles, who had never seen them in the flesh, to regard with peculiar interest their surviving cotemporaries. The one party would be anxious to learn, and the other party would delight to communicate, the verbal instruction received from them during the period of their personal association. A stock of information would thus be gathered, in perfect keeping at the outset with the apostolic writings, but open to corruption as it descended to another generation, and likely to be regarded as of authority *per se*, considering its source, and the slow process of putting the church in possession of the gospels and epistles, by transcription. That this was the course of events may be pronounced certain.* In the morning of their spiritual life, the dawn of a new and elevated being, and under the first influence of joys unknown before, the noviciates would crowd with eager curiosity around the venerable man, who had been in literal companionship with the inspired messengers of that truth which had made them free; and his report of their sayings and doings would be an inheritance which they would leave to others. Thus a series of oral traditions would be set afloat, vacillating in their character as they proceeded on their course, receiving embellishment and illustration on their passage, yet carrying weight with them, owing to the source from which they were derived; and owing to the written documents being of difficult access. In appealing to tradition, therefore, apart from Scripture, the heretics appealed to a channel of communication with the apostles, which the orthodox themselves accredited. Hence, when Valentinus pleaded in behalf of a crude mass of impieties respecting the Divine nature, that they had been orally handed down

* Thus Eusebius has preserved some fragments of Papias, a pious, simple, and credulous man, who, if not a disciple of John, as Irenæus reports, flourished early in the next age. He expresses himself as follows:—"If I met any one who had conversed with the elders, I cautiously enquired of him what had been the sayings of those elders? What Andrew, what Peter, what Philip, what Thomas, what James, what John, what Matthew, what the other disciples of the Lord, had been wont to say? For I did not think that any such profit could be derived from the reading of books, as from the living voices of men yet on the earth."—Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. c. 9.

Thus also Irenæus says of Polycarp:—"I have yet present to my mind the gravity of his demeanour, the majesty of his countenance, the purity of his life, and the holiness of the exhortations with which he fed his flock. I almost think that I can still hear him relating how he had conversed with John, and with many others, who had seen Jesus Christ, and repeating the words he had received from their lips, and the accounts they had given him of the Saviour's miracles and doctrines."—Iren. in Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. 20.

from the apostles, Irenæus took exception against them as spurious, on the ground that they were not in accordance with the universally known apostolic tradition which agreed with the written epistles.* But before Irenæus wrote, a dispute had arisen among the orthodox, which Dr. Bennett omits to notice, but which is of great importance, because it shows that in the first post-apostolical age, the church was listening to an oral testimony, upon a point which none of the apostles mooted in their epistles, and which gave an uncertain sound. We allude to the controversy respecting the time for keeping Easter, which divided the eastern and western churches, the Asiatics pleading the authority of a tradition derived from John and Philip, and the Latins that of a tradition derived from Paul and Peter. From this it plainly appears that an oral law had arisen, and was appealed to as an authority by the orthodox—that it had originated an observance, as of apostolic origin, which certainly has no sanction from their writings—and that the matter of its testimony varied according to its presumed descent from different apostles. It is easy to perceive how this would work. Let Polycarp at Smyrna, or Anicetus at Rome, throw the shield of the apostles over an observance which is clearly supplemental to the ritual prescribed in the record, on the strength of its appointment having been verbally transmitted to them; and what should prevent Valentinus from claiming the same protection, through the same medium, for his male and female Eons? Accordingly, ecclesiastics disappointed in their hopes of advancement in the church, yet anxious to cut a figure in the world—designing knaves, eager to gain public confidence in order to make it pander to their profit—crotchetty men, impatient to yoke a herd of converts to their conceits—and recruits from the pagan schools of philosophy, desiring to turn to some account their knowledge of Plato and Pythagoras—appeared as heresiarchs, or the gifted possessors of new truths, in extension of the faith contained in the written word, taking the same line of argument with reference to doctrines, as the orthodox did with reference to ceremonies—that of verbal descent from the apostles.

Perhaps we have dwelt too long upon this point, but we deem it always desirable to trace up evils to their source, for the sake of truth, and because of the useful practical teaching to be derived from it. A fond and natural clinging of the mind to the memories of the men

* "Traditionem apostolorum in toto mundo manifestatam."—Iren. Adv. Hæres. lib. iii. c. 3. Dr. Bennett seems to think that Irenæus meant by the tradition of the apostles, simply their writings handed down. To us, he appears to include under the term both written and verbal communications, the truth of the latter, however, to be tested by their agreement with the former. He might abide by this rule in points of doctrine, but departed from it as to ceremonies, taking part with the Asiatics when the Easter controversy was revived, whose observance of it was grounded on a tradition derived from the "great lights" of Asia, Philip and John.—Polycrates in Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. 24.

who wrought miracles, traversed kingdoms, and shed their blood in the cause of the Gospel, led the early believers to receive without much questioning the fragmentary reports concerning them, which were orally preserved—to give them authority—to hand them over to others as a sacred deposit: and considering the vast heap of unscriptural rites and dogmas of which ultimately they became the substratum, it behoves us to exercise a salutary cautiousness in the indulgence of any mere human feeling, however innocent and laudable in itself. The church of the third and fourth centuries, warned by the heresies with which the second was rife, wisely abandoned traditionary doctrines, though still with a firm gripe keeping hold of traditionary ceremonies, and both were imposed in the plenitude of its temporal power. Through the course of the middle ages, ecclesiastical authority was rampant on the throne of Divine truth; and just as in the case of the Jews, the written law was perverted by the oral, so was the Christian code made void by the decisions of councils and conclaves, which claimed the reverence due to inspired oracles, as equally infallible. The march of the locust army in the prophecy, which left the land behind it like a desolate wilderness, was not more fatal to its verdure than was the “teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” destructive to the faith, spirit, and ethics, of Christianity. Its Saviour was superseded by a crucifix. Its advocate with the Father was deserted for a deified woman. Its atonement was exchanged for a consecrated wafer. Its baptism of the spirit was abandoned for holy water. Its throne of grace was left for the mummery of a shrine. Its precious promises were discarded for relics made of dead men’s bones. Its faith in Providence was supplanted by dependance upon tutelary saints. Its armour of righteousness was thrown aside for a shirt of hair. Its closet communion with the Omniscient and Unseen was abjured for confessional fellowship with a monk, haggling for his fee. Thus its visage was marred by human handling, that no traces of the original brightness remained, as in the case of Milton’s fallen angel. Instead of enlightening the mind, purifying the passions, and regulating the life, the high office of the truth of God, its creed was so falsified, and its moral standard lowered, by traditional authority, as to admit of the baser elements of our nature being retained in daily augmented strength in alliance with it. The formal was put in the place of the moral. Agreement in ceremonies was substituted for sympathy with holiness. Darkness was called light, and light darkness. The forbidden idolatry of the decalogue was tortured into a religious act. The teeth of the anathema against bowing down to graven images was extracted by distinctions drawn between transitive and intransitive, proper and improper, mediate and immediate, univocal and equivocal, analogical and seductive worship. Christianity was thus changed into a vast lie. The church became a worldly sanctuary, like the ancient temple in the

days of the money-changers ; but a baser kind of traffic was carried on in it, not the sale of animal victims to atone for sins, but that of dispensations to commit them. To neglect and perversion, in relation to the Bible, some of the magnifiers of tradition added absolute contempt. It was "*Scripturam dubiam, ambiguum ; præceptoram mutuum ; literam occidentam ; literam mortuam ; atramentum mortuum,*" or dead ink ; and "*nigrum evangelium,*" or the black gospel. Thus a plant of the Lord's right hand planting, whose leaves were for the healing of the nations, had a degenerate vine engrafted on it ; a parasite which coiled itself around the Tree of Life, spread its boughs unto the sea and its branches unto the river, covered the whole of Christendom with its shadow, and offered it fruit

" like that which grew
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flamed."

But the hour of detection came, and hitherto servile nations, indignant at the cheat which had been practised upon them, asserted the supremacy of the Divine word over human authority and power, the independent right of reason and common sense to interpret it, and thus laid the axe to the root of the deadly upas which for ages had been regarded as the true vine.

We have been led to make the preceding remarks, by certain movements in the religious world around us, and by an examination of Dr. Bennett's volume, which those movements seem to have originated. Through the three centuries which have elapsed since the Reformation commenced, but two opinions in the main have been held by the nominally reformed in our own country respecting it. It has been viewed as too little of an advance from the old state of things by one party ; and as too forward a step by another. The former opinion produced Puritanism and modern Dissent ; the latter has given rise to various attempts to force a Protestant Episcopacy upon the national suffrage. Still, the latter party have agreed with the former in regarding the Reformation as a great good in itself ; and until now have only whimpered a little, at the thought of its principles being so opposed to prescription, as completely to invalidate their *jus divinum* claim to the sole pastorate of the people of these realms. But sticklers for the right of a triplicate of bishops, priests, and deacons, alone to interpret Scripture, their interpretations being authoritative canons, connecting, too, some important addenda to it, coming down through a succession of triplicates from the apostles, have of late abandoned the subdued tone in which dislike to the reformed doctrine was once expressed. There is now no muttering. It has ceased to be like the sigh and sob of the wind, an intimation that the element would break out into gale and storm if permitted. Openly has the Reformation been stigmatised as a rebellion

against God, while its authors have been vilified,* and the profession of Roman Catholicism been assumed by members of the Church of England, still remaining within its pale. The object aimed at in all this, is to purify the national mind from the conception that the Scriptures contain the whole sum of doctrine and duty obligatory upon the church. It is to gain possession of a deposition of sacred truth and Divine authority, which the papacy assumes to have been to have been the private gift of the apostles to their successors, to have been transmitted through the fathers, preserved in its bosom, and which is the foundation of whatever is unscriptural in its creed, its ritual, and its claims. Hence Protestantism is abjured as an attribute foreign to the constitution of the Anglican Church. The work of the reformers is denounced as a profane meddling on the part of a few ignorant, and time-serving tools of the state. Cranmer is placed among the heresiarchs. The fires of Smithfield, if not vindicated, are excused as the occasional excesses of a system of correction for heretics, quite lawful and wholesome, and of a kindred character to paternal flagellations. Thus we are taught to regard the church over which Dr. Howley now presides, as essentially the same as that which had Becket for its head.† We are to view the

* In the year 1825, the British Critic congratulated Mr. Isaacson upon translating and publishing Bishop Jewel's Apology for the Church of England, "as speaking the sense of that church," and as rendering "valuable service to the cause of Protestantism." In the year 1841, the same journal denounced Jewel as a hypocrite, and his book as a dishonest performance.

† Mr. Sibthorp, in his recent pamphlet, "Some Answer to the Enquiry—Why are you become a Catholic?" thus notices the inconsistency of some of his former brethren in this instance:—

"Their view * * * is that the present Anglican Church is identically one and the same with that which St. Augustine planted in the sixth century, over which St. Thomas, of Canterbury, presided in the twelfth, and Warham at the commencement of the sixteenth; as properly therefore a part of the Catholic church, under the presidency of Archbishop Howley, as she ever was, or as the Church of Rome now is. This asserted unity is surely not of a very obvious kind, but liable to some serious difficulties. For to test its validity and soundness, let us bring together the above-named four distinguished individuals, and suppose them met in conference. Now will they concur in doctrine, discipline, and church government? Are they in a visible or a real unity on any of these topics among themselves? Quite the reverse. There are three against one, and one against three. And they disagree so much, that those doctrines which the three former, St. Augustine, St. Thomas, and Archbishop Warham, teach as Divine truths, Archbishop Howley condemns and rejects; partly, as blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits; entirely, as unwarranted by Scripture. * * * Suppose myself, or any other presbyter of the Anglican Church, coming before these four prelates, and submissively listening to receive Catholic verity from their concordant confession, as knowing that the truth of God cannot vary, and with a real attachment to Catholic unity? It is undoubted, that while three of them would enjoin me, on pain of heavy spiritual penalties, to offer up the sacrifice of the mass, the inculcation on my flock of the doctrines, for example, of purgatory, of invocation of the blessed virgin, and of the saints—the last named, Dr. Howley, would as strongly forbid me to do the former, or to hold, or to teach, either of the latter.

Reformation, hitherto deemed a constitutional change in the character of the Church of England, as only a temporary spasm of the body corporate, like that to which the best regulated human frame is subject through the secretion of bilious humours. We are to reverence the episcopal clergy, thus hooked on to the ancient hierarchy, as possessing through it a prescriptive ministerial authority and grace, with a secret gift of illumination as to the meaning of Scripture, and treasures of truth hidden from the profane eye of the world in the mighty folios of the fathers—mere scraps indeed when taken singly, and of little apparent importance to the uninitiated, but forming together a respectable manual of polity and faith, very precious to those who go snuffing up the air of early times in quest of an aroma of sacramental efficacy and priestly absolutism. We are to receive the testimony of such persons, as one concurrent with the word written, a sanctioned appendage to it, necessary to its explication, of equal authority, partaking too of the gift of inspiration, the matter of the testimony being gathered from the fathers, to whom it is held to have descended from the hoar antiquity of the apostolic age. Here then we are hastening on to the twentieth century since our Lord hung upon the cross—since the church received its charge to preach the Gospel to every creature—and yet called upon to debate the point, what the Gospel is, and where it may be found. It makes one sad and sick at heart, to think of men who have read the announcement, "I am the light of the world," groping among the tracts of Cyprian, the homilies of Chrysostom, the epistles of Basil, or the sermons of Augustine, in search of a fuller intelligence upon religious faith and practice, than what a divine revelation was expressly made to furnish. It is one of the most difficult duties to refrain from impatience, to see grave divines poking among the huge heap of dust and filings, of which patristic lore consists, to have them teasing and worrying us to death about morsels taken from the mass not worth a rush, and to be solemnly presented with them as equal to the fine gold of inspired truth. "Here are we" said old Johnson to one of these traders in small wares, "inhabiting a world bursting with sin and sorrow, and you come to me with your paltry talk about ends of packthread and fragments of paper."

While St. Augustine, St. Thomas, and Archbishop Warham, would require me to profess an hearty allegiance to the see of Rome, in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical, as Divinely constituted to rule and concentrate the kingdom of Christ on earth, Archbishop Howley would threaten me with heavy penalties, if I held the Bishop of Rome to have any jurisdiction at all in England, or any supremacy beyond his own see. I state no more than fact. And I ask again, am I then to be persuaded that there is a real unity between the Roman and the modern Anglican church?—p. 30, 31. This is unanswerable; Mr. Sibthorp, entertaining anti-protestant views, was upon the horns of a dilemma, either to secede from the Church of England, as he has done, or stoop to an unworthy duplicity.

The complaint has been urged against us, that we have not paid sufficient attention to the doctrines, claims, and movements of the Romanised clergy.* The complaint is unjust, as we were the first among the dissenting journals to expose and rebuke in a formal manner, the opinions embraced and the practices observed by the tractarians of Oxford. The public is a difficult steed to please and manage, as all journalists know. At first, we were found fault with in some quarters, as performing a needless service, in offering a professed vindication of sound Protestantism. It was deemed a tone of alarm without the occasion clearly justifying it. That such views as those entertained by the Pro-Catholic party in the Anglican Church should gain any wide acceptance in this reformed country was thought highly improbable. Their speedy abandonment, owing to their anti-scriptural character, was confidently predicted. These were opinions expressed both in and out of the Establishment. "This last labour," wrote Dr. Arnold in allusion to Mr. Newman's schemes, "is utterly vain." The tone of the head master of the Rugby school, is, however, now quite altered: "It is known," says he, "that a large proportion of the clergy have adopted, wholly, or in great part, the opinions and spirit of the tracts, and many of the laity have embraced them also." The current of general sentiment and feeling in the Church of England may be said to be flowing strongly in the channel which the tractarians have scooped out. These men have not laboured in vain. Their most sanguine expectations of success have been more than realized. In fact they have produced a profound and universal impression upon bishops, deans, prebendaries, rectors, vicars, and curates, winning converts in some, obtaining sympathy from others, and more or less influencing all.† Subsequent events have thus proved,

* In two letters which have appeared in the Patriot.

† The editor of the Christian Observer, hostile as he is to the Catholic party in the Church of England, has not escaped their influence, but been practically constrained to alter his behaviour. We do not allude to his changed aspect towards dissent and dissenters, but to the new studies to which he has evidently been applying himself with no common ardour. No one can have read the Observer of late years, without perceiving that its conductor has been deep in rubrics and canons, conning over their details so as to have become an accomplished master of the ceremonies in usages ecclesiastical, fully qualified to drill his brethren in matters of clerical vestments, positions, and such like grave concerns. Mr. Wilkes has repeatedly disclaimed all sympathy with Mr. Newman's views, and written elaborately against them, but his learned disquisitions upon minute points of outward observance are plainly referable to the influence of the modern advocates of a ritual religion at Oxford.

The Sunday after the Congregational meeting at Nottingham, being with an Episcopalian family in a retired country village, we went to the parish church—an agreeable duty, as it admits of what rarely occurs in this divided world, a practical recognition of others out of the pale of our own communion, as integral parts of the great

that it was far from being a needless undertaking, to give in these pages, an early and formal notice of the opinions of the semi-papal school, then forming, now organized and successful.

We now recur to this attempt to elevate the wisdom of men to an authority co-ordinate with the wisdom of God, owing to the publication of the work before us, offering a convenient opportunity. It is on the Theology of the Church, by Dr. Bennett, and forms the Eighth Series of the Congregational Lecture. Much has been written upon this subject; and the leading controversy of the day renders it an important service to put the public mind in possession of just views of ancient Christianity. Authors upon this point have frequently been partizans, and have either exhibited the wheat to be found in the early church writers, omitting the chaff, or turned out the chaff to the neglect of the wheat, just as private feeling directed. There wanted an accurate and impar-

Christian family. The clergyman, a good and zealous man, is, like Mr. Wilkes, no follower of Dr. Pusey. The church—the walls of which were once damp, mouldy, and green—its pews rotten—and its roof hung with cobwebs—had been thoroughly refurbished. In former well-remembered days, the psalms of Sternhold and Hopkins were sung to the barbarous music of a clarionet and bassoon, but then *Te Deum* was chanted to an organ, in a manner that was impressive and delightful. But while singing Watts's hymn beginning with the prosaic line, "How sad our state by nature is," the clergyman came out of the reading desk, passed along the chancel within the communion rail, and knelt down at the table in silent prayer. At the close of the hymn he stood up on the north side of the communion table, and read the epistle and gospel, the Nicene creed, and commandments. This is according to the rubric, but the practice was generally abandoned as inconvenient, and as savouring of the old superstition respecting the holiness of the altar. Its general observance now, is another instance how extensively the influence of Puseyism is affecting the Church of England.

Take another instance. The church of St. Mary's, in Stafford, is at present undergoing a complete metamorphosis. The rector, a *protégé* of the late Bishop Ryder, is no friend to Puseyism, but is practically influenced in his course by its spirit. The pulpit is to be removed in order that nothing may interrupt the view of the altar. The galleries also are to be taken down, the pews abolished, and in their place stalls are to be introduced. This may be architecturally right, but the genius of Puseyism originated the movement. The object is to assimilate the fabrics as much as possible to their pristine condition—to adapt them for the exhibition of ceremonies—their use as places where people may hear sermons being a Protestant innovation. Many churchmen, still true to the Reformation, have on other grounds given in their adhesion to this scheme, and voted the downfall of the "great and little parlours" as the pews are called. It must be confessed, that some Protestant places of worship do not appear to advantage, when compared with Catholic edifices in their interior arrangements. The pew of the nobleman in a village church is frequently on a raised platform completely isolated—that of the squire is often large enough to hold his family down to the third and fourth generation—while the serf takes his seat on an uncurtained and uncushioned block. One of the most disgusting specimens of distinction in this way, is the Marquis of E * * * 's private chapel, divided into two equal parts by a lattice screen, the one compartment being solely devoted to noble blood, the other to domestics, the pulpit being midway in the screen!

tial digest for the use of the English scholar, as most of the works of the first four centuries remain in their original language, while there are many who could study them in their native dress to whom they are inaccessible through their costliness. For such, Dr. Bennett's volume is specially designed and adapted, and it will be read with pleasure and profit. It is a wearisome task to go through the Fathers,

"O'er bog and steep, through strait, rough, dense, and rare,"

a pilgrimage certainly which a man will soon abandon who is not blessed with a large stock of patience and application, and one in which he will very soon be brought to a halt if he only deals in a little small Greek and Latin. They are a huge mass of materials, some rough from the mine, others wrought without polish into uncouth shapes, others fused into philosophic abstractions, poetical creations, or silly legends. There are peculiar idioms to be met with, logical subtleties, oratorical arts, involved language, ἀμφιβολία, rendering it difficult to know what was the real meaning of the writer. Then there are the vagaries of ancient heretics eternally obtruding upon us, so that a student who would push his way through such a scene of difficulty and discouragement, had need to belong to that severe and hardy race of whom "Maister Lever" spoke in his sermon at Paul's cross: "At five of the clocke in the evening, they have a supper not much better than theyr slender dinner, immediatlye after the whyche, untill it be nine or tenne of the clocke, they go unto studye, and beyng without fyre, are fayne to walk or runne up and downe halfe an houre to gette a heate on theyre fete, when they go to bed." To a person of refined and fastidious taste in his reading, relishing a beautiful imprint and a lucid style, we know not a more uninviting morsel than the wretched Latin in which the lost Greek of Irenæus's onslaught on heresy exists; nor would such an one think himself travelling through an oasis, if compelled to attend the footsteps of Clement's Pedagogue. We are now referring to scholastic difficulties and other uninviting things to be found in the fathers, rather than to the substantial merit of their works, which we conceive to be quite sufficient to compensate a divinity student for seeking an acquaintance with them. All that we mean to intimate is, that he must not look for a holiday pastime; not expect a clear and evenly-flowing stream which he may follow along level banks, but one which will lead him into many rough and crooked places, and occasionally present the aspect of a stagnant pool with its coating of weeds and slime. As, however, the early theologians were not a Saxon race, and but few of them have been taught our mother tongue; as one or two hundred mighty folios of the olden time, are not to be expected upon the shelves of many, though conversant with the difference between ecclesiastical Greek and Latin, and the classic language of the Augustan age; we rejoice in being able to refer to Dr.

Bennett's volume as an accurate and interesting compendium of the modes of thinking upon sacred subjects prevalent in the first ages. He must be content to be numbered in certain quarters with the

"Courteous destroyers, meek bears, and affable wolves ;"

but having read the volume with some care, having been at pains in days gone by to look into antiquity for ourselves, as well as taking a side-long glance at it now, we do not hesitate to say, that a more honest and impartial representation of the mind of the ancient church could hardly have been produced. There are some points in which we differ from Dr. Bennett, as in his idea of the great cities through the first three centuries possessing only one congregation, and in his candid view of Justin Martyr on baptism, whose language appears clearly to us that of the *opus operatum*. But these are minor matters, and we can quietly merge them, inviting attention to the main sentiments expressed, as those of truth and soberness. The reading public, seated by a bright fireside, often in most luxurious ease, can form but little conception of the real drudgery that is undergone by those who cater for their instruction, or of the nice combination of qualities which must meet in the intellect of the man who furnishes such a work as the one before us. Diligence to collect facts, and dexterity to combine them ; a spirit quailing not at the task of reading afresh the original documents, poring over obscure passages, and consulting annotations ; accuracy, judgment, scholarship, impartiality, together with the pen of a ready writer ; these are some of the endowments, which the composition of the present work required in order to be successful, and we feel fully justified in saying that it displays them.

The nearer the fountain, the purer the stream, is an oft repeated cry in these times. In the reference with which it is used, it means, that the farther we go back to the apostolic age, the clearer views of truth we shall find in the church. But the parties who raise this hue and cry, are tricksters whose practice is inconsistent with their profession. If we embark in their vessel to traverse the past, cheerily we sail through some thirteen centuries, when at the fifth from the apostolic era, there is a stoppage as though wind and tide suddenly became adverse, or as though a dead calm had occurred like that in the Ancient Mariner :—

"Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion,
As idle as a painted ship,
Upon a painted ocean."

The voyage in short, is at end, when we have come within sight of Chrysostom, Basil, Gregory, and Cyprian. These are the happy islands on the great main of Christian antiquity. To beat about among them, is deemed a more profitable speculation than to pass on to the track lying between them and the apostles. Now we can conceive of the cry

to which we have referred, penetrating into the study of Dr. Bennett, disturbing his meditations, and inducing him to cruise in the theology of the early church. But he, good easy man, has evidently taken the terms in their full literal meaning, discarding the esoteric sense, according to which, nearness to the apostles, signifies the respectable distance of a few centuries from them. At the era of the Nicene council, there was a broad development of that ecclesiastical regimen, and those monastic habits, to which Episcopalians have become so fondly wedded, which makes it a pet period with them. But if in the fourth century, we have the early church, we have it still more so in the third and second, and therefore the present writer, being a bishop and no novice, has selected the theologians of the latter periods for review. Of the seven lectures in the volume, the fourth, which treats "of the Church, its Officers, and Worship," will be read with the greatest interest. It was vauntingly said some years ago by an Episcopalian, that a Presbyterian will not venture out of the Bible, for there he immediately encounters, no longer in embryo, but fully formed in features not to be mistaken, his dreaded adversary Episcopacy—that a Romanist will not venture into the Bible, for there he immediately meets a spirit in direct contradiction to his views—while a member of the English establishment can freely expatiate over both fields, meeting with his rites and ordinances in the fathers, and in Scripture. Well, here we have an Independent addressing himself to this adventure, proceeding leisurely through two centuries of church history, casting about his optics in every direction, looking east, west, north, and south, to find a bishop in the diocesan sense, and now ready to make affidavit that the early church has no such article to produce. Such we are bold to affirm will be the testimony of those who examine the records of the primitive times, unless their vision should be somewhat disordered, like that of the hero of Cervantes on a memorable occasion. Men, however, have been slow to learn, that to form a correct judgment, they must go in the first instance, to a sober examination into the reality of things, and not bow down to the influence of their wishes and imaginations. When this is not done, truth is perverted as the consequence, and often so altered as to be incapable of recognition. The fierce unicorn on the arms of England, is a wide departure from the timid giraffe of the Nubian deserts, out of which it was manufactured; and as little resemblance is there between a modern prelate, and a primitive bishop, Henry of Exeter, and Clement of Rome. Congregationalists therefore, may claim the fathers as in favour of their ecclesiastical polity, meaning those who flourished in the second and third centuries, in comparison with whom those of the Nicene age must be called the sons.

Dr. Bennett's other Lectures are devoted to dogmatic theology, and ethics; but we must reserve our remarks thereon for a second notice.

1. *Sermons by the late Rev. Luke Forster, of Saffron Walden; with a Sketch of his Life. By the Rev. John Ely, of Leeds.* Jackson & Walford.
2. *Memoirs and Select Remains of the Rev. Thomas Rawson Taylor, late Classical Tutor at Airedale College. With an Introduction by James Montgomery, Esq.* Jackson & Walford.
3. *Lectures and Sermons by the late Rev. Robert Wardrop, Preacher in the United Secession Church. With Memoir, by the Rev. W. E. Thorburn, M.A., Hall-Fold, Lancashire.* Hamilton, Adams, & Co.
4. *Memoir and Sermons of the late Rev. Dr. Ferrier, of Paisley: compiled by the Rev. Andrew Ferrier.* Hamilton, Adams, & Co.
5. *Memoir of the Rev. Robert Findlater, of Inverness, &c. By the Rev. William Findlater, of Durness.* Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

Suetonius, the Roman historian, tells us, that it was a maxim with Julius Cæsar, never to inform his soldiers before hand, the hour at which they were to leave their incampments, or encounter their foes, that they might be habitually prepared to obey his orders. A greater captain than he said to his followers, "Watch, for ye know neither the day, nor the hour, wherein the Son of Man cometh." And, assuredly, it is most beneficial to the Christian soldier, at all times to expect the approach of his Lord, by which a guard is kept, both against slothful indolence and open sin. The awful uncertainty of his coming is affectingly illustrated by the memorials of five brethren, in the Christian ministry now before us, who were called to their account at the respective ages of 28, 33, 39, 56, and 72 years. Two of them ministered in England, and three in Scotland. Each possessed characteristic excellencies and mental adaptation for lengthened service, but it is affecting to observe, that the majority of them were cut off in the midst of their days. "Work while it is called day, the night cometh in which no man can work."

Mr. Forster's memoirs show him to have been a highly gifted and affectionate Congregational pastor. In Mr. Taylor's portraiture, we discover the loveliest combination of genius and godliness—of rare talents and permanent piety, consecrated to the cause of Christ, in connexion with the Independents. Mr. Wardrop's memorial, shows that he was a well furnished and devoted young minister, though never permitted to assume the pastoral office in the Secession Church. Dr. Ferrier was an accomplished, eloquent, and powerful preacher, of the same denomination, for nearly half a century in the town of Paisley. Mr. Findlater exhibits an interesting specimen of a faithful, zealous, and laborious Home Missionary, and settled minister of the Kirk, in the Highlands of Scotland.

Instead of a formal review, we shall content ourselves with giving a

sketch of the life of each of these excellent of the earth, and a general remark or two on the several volumes in which they are exhibited to our notice.

The Rev. Luke Forster was born at Glanton, Northumberland, on the 25th of May, 1801. His mother died while he was yet a youth, but her valuable instructions in life, and her solemn counsels in death, were indelibly impressed on his heart, and were among the principal means of his subsequent conversion to God. He left his venerated father's roof in his seventeenth year, to become assistant in a school at Newcastle. While in that situation, his religious convictions were deepened, through the afflictions of his brother and sister, and, by means of a sermon preached by the Rev. J. Semple, and he soon gave evidence of being a decided Christian. In his nineteenth year, he gave himself to the Lord, and then to his people, assembling for worship in Framwell Gate Chapel. He had, for a long time, secretly cherished a wish to become a minister; and now the subject assumed a seriousness and importance in his view, which allowed him no rest till the question of duty was settled.

With the concurrence of all parties, he devoted himself, in due time, to the work of the ministry, and commenced his preparatory studies under the direction of his beloved friend, the Rev. Walter Scott. He entered Hoxton College in the autumnal session of 1821, and continued there till the summer of 1825, when he began his ministerial labours in the town of Ipswich. He went thence to Blackburn, where he was invited to settle, and was ordained over the Independent church, in that town, on September 22nd, 1825.

In the following month, he married the lady on whom his heart's affection had been placed for more than two years, and who still survives to deplore her loss. His domestic life at Blackburn, was a chequered scene. Affliction and death were frequent inmates of his family. Two lovely children were successively consigned to the tomb, concerning whom he was often wont to say, "I think of their graves with tears—of their spirits with praise." His own health began at an early period to be impaired, both by the atmosphere of Blackburn, and the arduousness of his labours. At the expiration of seven years, it was deemed necessary that he should leave that town. He thence removed to Saffron Walden, and in September, 1832, was recognized as pastor of the church there. Amongst that attached, devoted, and generous people, whose kindness to him while living, whose respect for his memory when dead, and whose considerate attention to his mourning widow and fatherless child, are deserving of all praise; he laboured with growing acceptableness and usefulness for five years, when it became evident that the seeds of disease, which had been thickly sown in his constitution before he removed to the south, had taken root, and with rapid growth were about to ripen

into maturity, and produce the most deadly fruits. From this period, to the time of his decease, his labours were frequently intermitted, and, sometimes, even for months together. Through the winter of 1839, and spring of 1840, he was so far recovered, as to be able to perform his pulpit duties without the assistance which had been so long and liberally provided by his people. But it was evident that his end was drawing nigh, though, by himself, unperceived; and on the Lord's-day, June 14th, 1840, he preached for the last time, and on the 23rd, the very day on which he was to have addressed his associated ministerial brethren—while declaring that “Christ was precious to him, and would be to all that put their trust in Him,” he departed this life, to be “with Christ.”

He was borne to the house of all living on the 3rd of July, attended by the respected and estimable vicar of the parish, and by many neighbouring ministers, as well as by numbers of his flock. The funeral address was delivered by his much loved friend, the Rev. Mr. Wilkinson, the Baptist minister of Saffron Walden, to a deeply affected audience. In his address, Mr. Wilkinson bore honourable testimony to the excellence and worth of his departed friend.

“The minister of your choice,” says he, “was my companion and friend. Nor has there been an interruption for a single hour to the happy union since it was formed between us. I valued him as a brother in Christ, as a fellow-labourer in the Gospel. And I bear witness to the kind and Christian feelings which endeared him to all his brethren in the ministry, as well as to all within the circle of his acquaintance. The love which animated his heavenly master, was eminently enthroned in his own heart and governed his actions; while the natural cheerfulness and vivacity of his disposition produced an atmosphere of lively satisfaction to all that breathed it.”

Mr. Ely has done ample justice to the memory of his beloved friend, in the interesting memoir prefixed to the sermons published from Mr. Forster's manuscripts. The materials for a “Life” were scanty, but by skilful arrangement, and apposite remark, in combination with testimonies supplied by various friends, the esteemed biographer has placed the character of Mr. Forster in its true light. The sermons, twelve in number, are on the following subjects, The Power of Evil habit—the Influence of the Holy Spirit—the Sin against the Holy Ghost—the Doctrine of Election—the Lamb of God—Job's confidence in the Redeemer—the Redemption of the Soul—the Difficulties of Salvation—the Gospel received and diffused by the Thessalonians—Brotherly Kindness—Duties of a Church to its Pastor—and Submission to God. The sermons vary in character as in subject. Some appear to have been prepared with more care than others, but all bear the impress of the author's mind. In doctrine they are sound, in diction simple and elegant, in arrangement lucid, in illustration beautiful, and in appeal fervid and importunate.

The volume has been prepared with much care by Mr. Forster's brother-in-law, the Rev. Alexander Reid, of Newcastle, and forms an interesting memorial of the deceased, and as such, will doubtless be

regarded by all his friends. A secondary object in the publication of the "Life and Sermons," is to supply a deficiency occasioned by the inattention of our deceased brother to an important duty—that of making provision for his beloved survivors; an object which we earnestly desire may be accomplished by the extensive sale of the volume now commended to the attention of our readers.

We gave a brief sketch of the life of the Rev. Thomas Rawson Taylor on the publication of the first edition of his "Memoirs and Select Remains," but on the appearance of their second edition, compressed into one volume and reduced in price, we cannot forbear presenting to our readers a beautiful sketch of his life, from the hands of James Montgomery, the bard of Sheffield.

"The events of Mr. Taylor's life may be summed up in about as many sentences as there were distinct stages of it.

"He was born at Ossett, near Wakefield, in 1807. He was a docile, affectionate, and home-loving child. From the age of seven to eleven years, he attended the grammar-school in Bradford, and, from the latter date, till he was fourteen, was a pupil in the seminary of Dr. Clunie, at Manchester. In both cases he approved himself a quick, retentive, persevering learner. In 1822, he was placed in a merchant's counting-house, and there fulfilled his duties with as much assiduity and integrity, as though the lot had been of his own choosing. Two years afterwards he was allowed to enter upon an occupation far more congenial to the natural bias of his mind, and his early, deep, but inly-cherished hopes, at some future period, to spend his time, his talents, and his life, in that service which is perfect freedom to those, and those only, who voluntarily, yet under the constraining love of Christ, enlist in it. Here, as a Sunday-school teacher, he began to exercise his gift as a spiritual instructor of elder persons also, and was encouraged to offer himself as a candidate for the ministry. In 1826, he was admitted a student of Idle (now Airedale) academy, under the late Rev. Mr. Vint, and gave himself wholly to preparation for the work to which he had determined to devote, and did devote, heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, till both flesh and spirit failed in the issue. In 1830, the consummation of his wishes on earth, in his way to heaven, appeared to be attainable, namely, that he might be a leader of his fellow-pilgrims on their common journey from the city of destruction to the celestial city. He accepted the office of minister of Howard Street Chapel, in Sheffield. His correspondence with several respectable members of that communion, as well as the body at large, previous to, during, and on resigning, that charge, deserve the deepest attention, both from preachers and hearers of the word, in their relationship to each other, their respective duties, common privileges, and personal responsibilities. "He that readeth let him understand," and if he be not wiser and better, both for the perusal of these documents, and the meditations of his own mind upon their contents, he may deem it a misfortune, and suspect that there is something not right either in his apprehensions or his affections on this subject. He entered earnestly, yet tremblingly, upon this important charge. He had already the sentence of death within him. It was written in blood, and never cancelled, though the execution was long delayed, in mercy to his friends, and for the perfecting of the work of the Lord in him, and by him, so far as the latter was required. After two years of faith painfully tried, hope anxiously, yet flatteringly, deferred, and patience beautifully exemplified—for during that term of his connexion with his flock, he was not able to perform more than six months of full work,—he meekly and unrepiningly gave back his credentials into the hands from which he had

accepted them, even those of his Redeemer, having been fully persuaded from the beginning, that not from man, but from Christ Jesus, he had received his call to preach the Gospel, and to preach it in such manner, such places, and so long only, as the Lord and Master should appoint, not as the servant and disciple might choose. Already while a student at Airedale College, he had attacks of blood-spitting, and to the last he was thus liable to part with life, as it were, drop by drop, at the peril of being, on any sudden access of the disorder, required to pour out the whole in sacrifice to God, who gave that life, and as a sovereign prescribed the terms of its tenure, from moment to moment. On his retirement from Sheffield, he was associated for a short time in easier ministerial service, as a helper to his venerable father. Afterwards, he was invited to the office of classical tutor at Airedale College, where he himself had been a theological student. This he undertook with that fervency of spirit in which it was his element of felicity to live, whether labouring, suffering, or resting from both, to be prepared for either, at the next change. From this point we must hasten to the end, as he did, only referring the readers of these memoirs to the remaining pages of the volume, containing letters to his friends, and other memorials of journeyings to and fro, in England and Scotland, previous to his departure to "that bourne from which no traveller returns." The pathos, the interest, and even the power of his compositions, appear to increase as the flesh grows weaker, and the spirit burning brighter within, diffuses the beauties of holiness all without. Having waited all the days of his appointed time, his change came on the 15th of March, 1835.

"(He) went as calmly as at eve
 The cloud of sunset melts away,
 While blending lights and shadows weave
 The winding sheet of dying day.
 No,—the day dies not ; round the globe
 It wings its flight o'er land and main,
 Morn, noon, and evening, are its robe,
 And solemn night its starry train.
 So when to us (He) seemed to die,
 And leave a shadow in (his) shroud,
 'Twas but the glory passing by,
 And darkness gathering round the cloud."

These "Memoirs and Select Remains," beautifully illustrate Mr. Taylor's taste for Epistolary Correspondence, Essay-writing, and Poetic composition. The poetic faculty was predominant among his mental powers, and would doubtless, had his life been spared, have put forth its energies in such attempts at verse as would have won for him universal admiration. But his days were soon numbered, and his holy, happy spirit winged its flight to dwell in more congenial climes, and to sing in sublime strains the praises of her Creator and Lord.

Again we commend these "Memoirs and Select Remains," full of the germs and blossoms of piety and genius, alike to the young and to the aged, to the student and the pastor, to all whose taste enables them to appreciate the efforts of genius, and whose religion causes them to delight in the indications of eminent piety.

The amiable and gifted Robert Wardrop, author of "Lectures and Sermons," was connected with the United Secession Church. Pos-

sessed of superior mental endowments, and enjoying the advantages of an excellent education, both of which he diligently improved; his attainments were very considerable, and his prospects highly flattering. Under the influence of high religious principle, he devoted himself to the work of the Christian ministry. His letters show how deeply he felt the solemn responsibility of that office, and how intensely anxious he was to be qualified for the performance of its duties. Having passed, with great credit to himself, his course of preparatory studies at St. Andrews, he received his licence from the presbytery, and commenced his brief career as a preacher. The distinction he had acquired at the University, led his friends to indulge sanguine expectations as to his future success, and though his subsequent life was very limited, it was sufficient to justify their fondest anticipations. His health, originally delicate, was unequal to the arduous work on which he was anxious to enter, having obliged him to decline the urgent application made for his settlement, it speedily gave way to the attacks of disease, and ere he had attained his thirty-third year, his mortal pilgrimage had closed. His friends, anxious to preserve his memory, have published the discourses contained in this little volume. In this we think, they have done well. The writer could have no idea of their publication, when he wrote them; they are only specimens of his usual preparations for the pulpit. Viewed in this light, they must be regarded as no ordinary productions. There is in them a simplicity and elegance of language, a propriety and beauty of illustration, and often an ingenuity and originality of thought, while in every page their breathes a spirit of piety that must delight the intelligent and devout reader. The memoir by Mr. Thorburn is very interesting. No one can read it without lamenting that a life so valuable should have been so brief; though our sorrow may well be checked by the reflection that he now possesses that perfect knowledge, purity, and love, he was here so anxious to attain.

Dr. Ferrier was born at Perth, April 3, 1763. He received an elementary education in his native town; but subsequently studied at Abernethy, Pathhead, and Edinburgh. He lost his father, while he was a child. Giving early evidences of piety, he entered in due time on a course of study preparatory to the work of the ministry. He completed his studies in 1786; passed trials in the course of the same year, and shortly afterwards became colleague with the Rev. James Alice, the venerated pastor of the Associate Congregation of Paisley. He succeeded to the sole pastorate in June, 1798. This office he held alone, with distinguished honour, till July, 1833; when, through the infirmities of advancing years and continued and hopeless affliction, a colleague having become necessary, the Rev. William France was united with him in the pastoral office. His indisposition began in 1831, and continued till 1835, when it terminated in death. His last appearance

in public, was at the Lord's table in August, 1835; he spoke on that occasion with extraordinary power to the assembled church; and his last day on earth was the twentieth of December, 1835. "He retained his character to the last. He was noble in death. He began his new and more glorious manner of existence, with the calm composure of one entering on scenes which he had often visited before. It was the evening of the Sabbath, and he conversed with all but his wonted vivacity and power. He adverted with the deepest interest and gratitude to the state of the congregation, and named especially the brotherly love which seemed prevailing. He spoke with animation on the aspects of the church generally, on the great interests of the world, and on the exercise of saints at death. He discoursed also, and with thrilling power, on the love of God,—a subject ever fresh to one whose distinguishing characteristic, it has been fitly said, 'was his extreme susceptibility of all sublime and generous impressions.' During a pause in the conversation, he asked the speaker, who was privileged to share his latest meditations, to read the twelfth chapter of Isaiah, after which, he repeated this passage, 'In this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people, a feast of fat things full of marrow, a feast of wines on the lees well refined;' and, as if to indicate his impression of the nearness of his dissolution, and his happy anticipations of the blessedness of heaven, he added, 'Exquisite provisions.' This was the last comment on the Scriptures which fell from his lips. It was now near nine o'clock, and, ere thirty minutes had elapsed, he bowed his head and peacefully resigned his spirit to God." He was interred with every demonstration of respect on Christmas day, 1835; and the event was improved on the following Sabbath, by his intimate friend Dr. Mitchell of Glasgow, and Rev. W. France, his estimable colleague.

The volume whence this imperfect sketch is taken, is replete with interest to the student, the pastor, and the private Christian. The extracts from the Diary and Journals of Dr. Ferrier, together with the four sermons in the volume, show him to have been a Christian of no common order, as well as a man of pre-eminent talent. The personal and domestic trials of Dr. Ferrier were considerable. He was on several occasions in danger of losing his life by singular and painful casualties; he was twice married, and buried both his wives; he lost some of his children by death, one of whom was a son of brilliant talents and extraordinary powers, who died just as he was rising into notice, and about to be employed in the service of the church; his personal afflictions were painful and trying in the extreme, but amidst all, he manifested the spirit of a true Christian, and showed that his views of the Divine rectitude, and wisdom, and goodness, were of the most enlarged and glorious character.

We have been deeply interested in this little volume, and think that it approaches the nearest in interest and effect to "President Edward's

Life," and "Cecil's Life and Remains," of any modern biography that has come under our notice. The deceased is made to speak for himself; only a few incidental and connecting remarks are thrown in by his son, the Rev. Andrew Ferrier, in order to preserve the continuity of the narrative; and after reading the life, we think that Dr. Mitchell is borne out in the summing up which he gives of his character, in the funeral sermon preached the Sabbath after his interment:

"And now, should you ask us which of all the excellencies that shed lustre upon his life, and by their bright assemblage, formed his noble character, were predominant, we should answer, we can hardly determine—for where all were so eminent, and so harmoniously blended, it is not easy to discriminate, or to assign the preference to any. It was a rare, a happy union of talents of the first order; a varied and admirable combination of excellencies, moral and intellectual. But should we still be pressed to decide, we should mention four, namely, vigorous and expansive intellect, independent and uncompromising integrity,—warm and diffusive benevolence,—holy and childlike humility. By these, especially in their harmony, he was conspicuously distinguished; by these he was illustriously adorned."

The Rev. Robert Findlater was son of parents distinguished for enlightened, simple-hearted piety, in connexion with the Kirk of Scotland. They were Seceders in practice, though not in profession. The law of patronage interfering to prevent a ministry in their parish church on which they could attend, they sought the Gospel in a neighbouring parish; and established and encouraged private meetings for conference and prayer amongst such as were like-minded with themselves. Their son Robert was born at Drummond, in Rosshire, in August, 1786. He was the subject of many prayers; and they had the gratification of witnessing answers to their petitions in the early piety and thorough devotedness of their son to the service of God. He passed through the customary course of education in youth, and studied for the ministry in Edinburgh. He was licensed in 1807, and in the year following was appointed to the missionary station at Rothiemurchus in connexion with the Kirk of Scotland. Among the Highlanders in that vicinity he laboured with great assiduity and devotedness, at the salary of only £40 per annum. The mission not answering his expectation, he was removed to a more promising, though still more laborious sphere of missionary labour, at Lochtayside, in 1810. In this mountainous district, he prosecuted his labours with great self-denial, perseverance, and faith. A few instances of success occasionally gladdened his heart; but it was not till after five years of holy and prayerful exertion that he witnessed anything approaching to a revival of religion among the inhabitants of the valleys and the hills. From the year 1816 to 1819, the Spirit of the Lord was poured out from on high; and multitudes were, through his instrumentality, in connexion with the occasional labours of his brethren at the sacramental seasons, roused from their lethargy and awakened to activity. Many during

that period of revival were born to God; and numerous cases are recorded in Mr. Findlater's life, of persons who came to him for enquiry and direction in their spiritual affairs. These records of experiences are interesting, as they show, that "there are diversities of operations, but one Spirit"—and that no general instructions on Christian experience can meet every case of spiritual anxiety and distress.

At the close of the year 1820 Mr. Findlater received a pressing invitation to become the stated minister of the chapel of ease at Inverness, which he accepted, and, in the May following, he began his ministerial career in that town. In this important sphere he moved and laboured, till the fatal year of 1832, when he, with multitudes besides, was prostrated in death by the direful cholera. He paid his annual visit to his former station in Breadalbane, and, on his return, he found the inhabitants of Inverness in consternation at the appearance of this awful and mysterious visitation. He zealously set himself to work amongst his friends, preaching and praying, when on the fifth day after his return, he was seized, and on the seventh was no more. At intervals his mind was composed; some of his last words were, "as a man, as a minister, I have had many comforts—on this, however, would I rest, 'He is a just God and a Saviour,'"—"it is an awful thought—an immortal soul going into eternity, in a perpetual stupor of sleep; (referring to the anticipated effects of an opiate which his medical adviser was anxious to administer)—tell my people—tell them—to make sure of an interest in Christ—that a death-bed is not the time." His very last words were, "Now is the need of Christ—how precious." Thus ended the life and labours of this humble, laborious, devoted servant of Jesus Christ; and his "Memoirs" by his beloved brother, may be regarded not only as a monument reared by the hand of affection to perpetuate his name to later times, but as calculated by its interesting and varied descriptions, to inform, edify, and encourage every missionary of the cross who may read them.

Four Addresses to the Young, delivered at Macclesfield. By the late Robert Stephens M'All, LL.D. London: Jackson and Walford. 12mo. pp. 92.

Our readers, we are sure, will be gratified by this announcement. Every relic of Dr. M'All is precious to his friends, and of no ordinary value to the Christian church. We, therefore, rejoice that these addresses have been unexpectedly found among his papers, and that his family have been induced to consent to their publication, in the hope of their promoting the scriptural improvement of the many young persons who still cherish a grateful and affectionate remembrance of his ministry. Not to them only, but to our youthful readers generally, we most cordially and earnestly recommend these discourses.

They are the only parts which can be recovered of a series of monthly lectures delivered in 1818, and their subjects are,—Christian Faith—the Enlightening Influence of the Divine Spirit—the Way of Holiness—and Christian Encouragement. To be able to discourse on such subjects in a manner intelligible and interesting to the young, is no ordinary attainment. Dr. M'All has, with admirable facility, presented upon each subject, a train of thought the best adapted to the class of persons for whose benefit he wrote. The youthful inquirer will find his difficulties carefully considered; he will see practical religion in its most inviting aspect; in the early and most perilous part of his Christian course, he will meet with the most valuable direction and encouragement. Without any laboured definitions, these discourses are distinguished by great exactness and precision in the statement of evangelical truth, and without any compromise of the dignity of the teacher, by a beautiful simplicity and condescension to the minds of the young. Those who are in the habit of addressing youth, would do well to study these discourses carefully, as in their most important and difficult engagements we know not where they can find a better model.

THE EDITOR'S TABLE.

A Wreath for the Tomb. An Essay, and a Sermon, on the Lessons taught by Sickness, with extracts from eminent authors, on Death and Eternity. By the Rev. Edward Hitchcock, LL.D., Professor of chemistry and geology, Amherst College, &c. &c. Second Edition. 16mo. Jackson & Walford.

The Great Commission; or, the christian church constituted and charged to convey the Gospel to the World. By the Rev. John Harris, D.D., President of Cheshunt College, Author of "Mammon," &c. Royal 12mo. Ward & Co.

Missions; their authority, scope, and encouragement. An essay; to which the second prize proposed by a recent association in Scotland, was adjudged. By the Rev. Richard Winter Hamilton, Minister of Belgrave Chapel, Leeds. 8vo. Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

Christian Consistency; or, the connexion between experimental and practical religion. Designed for young Christians. By E. Mannering. Second Edition. 12mo. R. Baynes.

Elements of Mental and Moral Science. By George Payne, LL.D. Second Edition, enlarged. 8vo. Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

Christian Churches; their nature and constitution, illustrated in a series of conversations, between a minister of the Gospel and a young Christian. By T. Coleman. 12mo. Ward & Co.

Hints illustrative of the Duty of Dissent. By the Rev. Thomas Binney. Third Edition. 12mo. Dinnis.

The Holy Ordinance of Christian Baptism: its doctrine and duty considered, with an especial view to the obligation it imposes upon parents, and children, and the church of Christ. 12mo. Jackson and Walford.

Conferences of the Reformers and Divines of the early English Church, on the Doctrines of the Oxford Tractarians; held in the Province of Canterbury, in the Spring of the year 1841. Edited by a Member of the University of ———. 8vo. Seeley & Burnside.

A Visit to the United States in 1841; by Joseph Sturge. 8vo. Hamilton, Adams, & Co. Theodora: a Treatise on Divine Praise; or the exercise of devout gratitude to God. By Nathaniel Rowton. 12mo. J. Snow.

Wesleyan Missions: their progress stated, and their claims enforced. With observations and suggestions, applicable to kindred institutions. By Robert Alder, D.D. Royal 12mo. J. Mason.

Four Discourses on the Sacrifice and Priesthood of Jesus Christ, and the Atonement and Redemption thence accruing; with supplementary notes and illustrations. By John Pye Smith, D.D., F.R.S. Second edition, enlarged. 12mo. Jackson & Walford.

Lucilla; or the Reading of the Bible. By Adolphe Monod. Translated from the French. 12mo. Tract Society.

Four Addresses to the Young, delivered at Macclesfield, by the late Robert Stephens M'All, L.L.D. 12mo. Jackson & Walford.

Three Discourses. On the Divine Will; on Acquaintance with God; on Revelation. By A. J. Scott, A.M. 12mo. Darling.

Luther; A Poem. By Robert Montgomery, M.A. Second Edition. 12mo. Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

Cæsar de Bello Gallico. With a Geographical Index. Edited by Philip Smith, B.A. 12mo. Simpkin, Marshall, & Co.

Greek Poetry for Schools; containing three Books of the Odyssey, selections from the Palatine Anthology, and other extracts, together with materials for Hexameters and Elegiacs, and the whole forming a practical introduction to Greek poetry and versification. 12mo. Simpkin & Co.

Moral Agency: and Man as a Moral Agent. By William M'Combie. 12mo. Seeley & Burnside.

Nothing New; or, the Judgment of Old Divines on Sentiments agitated in their day, and now revived by "the brethren," and others. 18mo. Simpkin, & Co.

A Manual Explanatory of Congregational Principles, By George Payne, L.L.D. 12mo. James Dinnis.

Memoirs of the Life, Character, and Ministry of William Dawson, late of Barnbow near Leeds. By James Erwert. 12mo. Hamilton & Co.

The Christian Weekly Miscellany and Weekly Family Expositor. Part II. Imperial 8vo. Groombridge.

Palmer's Map of Arabia Petraea the Holy Land, and part of Egypt, designed chiefly to illustrate those parts of the Old Testament which relate to the Exodus and Journeys of the Israelites, and their settlement in the Land of Promise. Folio. Roake and Varty.

The Jubilee of the World. An Essay on Christian Missions to the Heathen. By the Rev. John Macfarlane, minister of Collessie, Fifeshire. Published at the recommendation of four of the adjudicators of the Missionary Prize Essays, and under the sanction of the Committee. 8vo. W. Collins.

The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. A Fac Simile Reprint of the celebrated Geneva Testament, MDLVII. With the Marginal Annotations and References, the Initial and other Woodcuts, Prefaces, and Index. 12mo. S. Bagster & Sons.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

On October the 1st, 1842, will be published Part I. price 5s. of A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology. Edited by William Smith, Ph. D. Graduate of the University of Leipzig, Classical Tutor of Highbury College, Editor of the "Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities."

CHRONICLE OF BRITISH MISSIONS.

HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

CHANGE OF THE OFFICE OF THE HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.—The friends of the Home Missionary Society are respectfully informed that the Office of the Institution has been removed from No. 11, Chatham Place, to the Congregational Library, No. 4, Blomfield Street, Finsbury, where communications as usual can be addressed to the Secretaries.

Many of the officers of auxiliaries and associations have found it impracticable to make up their annual accounts by the 31st of March, so as to enable the Society to close its financial year on that day, as proposed in last Magazine; it has, therefore, been considered desirable that the proposed alteration should not be made this year; so that, as usual, the accounts will close on the 30th of April. The officers of auxiliaries, and other friends who have funds in their possession, or which they have yet to collect, are respectfully urged to send the amount by the 20th of April, that the acknowledgment may appear in the Magazine for May, as well as in the annual report. The amount received during the past month has been £700. The payments up to Lady-day amount to nearly £2000, leaving the Society in debt about £1700, including the balance from last month.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE AGENTS OF THE SOCIETY.—The following extracts are from the journals of missionaries appointed to their stations during the past year. The first extract is from a new station in Cumberland, not having been occupied by the missionary twelve months. The accounts are encouraging, when it is considered that prejudice had to be removed, the confidence of the people to be gained, the Gospel to be received, and its influence felt, by persons who had never been accustomed to the ministry of reconciliation. The field of labour occupied by the missionary is very large, and fearfully benighted. It ought to be named, that the missionary was sent at the request of a devoted Christian gentleman residing in the neighbourhood, who defrays nearly the whole expense of the station. God having given him wealth, he considers it his privilege to expend a portion of it in spreading the Gospel around him.

The second extract is from Nottinghamshire, and shows the difficulty which a missionary has to encounter in a new station, when there is determined opposition on the part of influential individuals. It requires prudence as well as zeal, on such stations, to prevent injury being done to the cause of religion.

The third extract is from a missionary in Lincolnshire, who has occupied his present field of labour only nine months. It is a new station, and promises abundant fruit. A Christian church has been formed, and a piece of ground, on which to build a chapel and school-house, has been given by a gentleman who has property in the neighbourhood, and who is already the largest contributor to the Home Missionary Society. It is expected that the chapel will be built during the summer.

INSTANCES OF USEFULNESS.—"Last month, I referred to the case of a young man who was brought to the knowledge of the truth, and I am now happy in being able to inform you of four others, that seem to have got good to their souls. Two of these are old men, a third is in the vigour of life, and the other is a little girl about eleven years of age. I could have informed you of some of these cases before now, but waited that I might be better able to judge of their characters; and both from observation, and the conversations I have had with them, I humbly trust I am not mistaken in saying, that, like the Corinthian converts, they are washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. At present, I shall refer to only one of these individuals, who is seventy-three years of

age. I have had many interesting conversations with this person, but especially one a short time ago, when I made enquiries regarding his past life, and how he had been led to embrace the truth. He frankly told me, that up to the time I came to this station, he had been entirely engrossed with the world, and had never thought about his soul and eternity; he had heard some people say, that there was a future state of rewards and punishments; others affirmed, that we died like dogs, to live no more; but, for his part, he never bestowed a serious thought upon the matter. He spent his Sabbaths in going from place to place, or in conversations about the world; "and this," he added emphatically, "is the manner in which the multitude around us is still living." He had attended the preachings regularly in his own district, and stated, that his mind had been gradually enlightened by the preaching of the Gospel, and the conversations I had with him from time to time. He had also been led to search the Scriptures, from which he derived comfort and instruction, and met with hundreds of passages that he never knew were in the Bible. He informed me, that I repeated to him a passage from John v. 10.—"He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself," which words had given him great comfort, for while meditating upon this subject, he obtained a peace and happiness to which he was formerly an entire stranger; he now saw the way to heaven, through a crucified Redeemer, quite distinctly. This had subdued his attachment to the world, for he had too long consumed the energies of his life upon it. Not only has this aged man undergone a change in his dispositions, inclinations, and conduct, but he also feels a deep interest in the spiritual welfare of those around him, and is inspired with an ardent desire for the conversion of his wife, whom he discerns to be a stranger to vital godliness. It is truly interesting to sit down to converse with these two old people, on whose heads time has long since shed its grey hairs. They have lived together the servants of mammon, for nearly forty years; they are now divided in their aims; their desires and feelings are not in unison as formerly: the one is taken into the Divine family, and the other is left; the one is light in the Lord, the other is still in nature's darkness, clinging to the law for righteousness and salvation. The husband now tells his wife, who has long been the partner of his joys and sorrows, and whose worldly schemes he was wont to enter into, to take her heart off the world, and to fix it upon Jesus Christ, as her only and all-sufficient Saviour. I am constrained to believe that this old man, who, up to his 73rd year, remained alike careless and earthly-minded, is now, and will be through eternity, a monument of sovereign, almighty grace. It is a delightful exhibition of the power of the Gospel, and the riches of Divine grace, when we behold sinners yielding their hearts to the Saviour at the eleventh hour. Some other cases in my next journal."

PUREYISM AND OPPOSITION.—"Our Bible classes are still flourishing, pleasing, promising; consequently, some imitation of them has been attempted on other ground, not only with a view of so instructing the young, that they may become wise unto salvation, but also that they may be instructed in the high churchism of the present day. *e. g.*—"Do you know," said the vicar, the other day, to his class, "how it is that no other minister beside myself can enter into my pulpit?" "Cas," replied a young, shrewd, and forward one, "there aint room for two." "That is not my meaning," the ecclesiastical instructor went on to explain; "I mean, that if any one were to enter my pulpit, not ordained by a bishop, he would be liable to transportation." He has also declared from the pulpit, and by letter, "that there are but three churches which have received their commission from Christ; viz., the Greek, the Romish, and the English church;" and "he who rejects the teaching of the church, risks the salvation of his soul."

Although cases of ecclesiastical oppression have been represented and recorded *ad nauseam*, still I cannot refrain from stating the following:—A lady of distinction

and high influence, called upon a poor woman at S——, and asked, "What place of worship do you attend?" "The Independent chapel, ma'am." "Indeed! And how long have you attended there?" "Ever since it was erected, and I attended the preaching of the Independents, before the building of the chapel, in all five years." "But why do you attend there?" "Please ye, my lady, I have found it good to be there, I have obtained much good to my soul." "But," said Lady D., "I wish you to attend church—both you and your husband—for unless the people attend the church, what will become of the clergy? and the church will be brought into contempt." This was cause of great trouble and distress to the poor woman, but feeling driven, and obliged, having received a present from the lady, with a letter inclosed, desiring and requesting her to go to church, she went, and went again; but now followed a painful dilemma, to one who wished to have a good conscience. Being heavy of hearing, she heard not one word; all the ceremonies were dumb shows to her; she looked on; but her thoughts were busy; she thought of God, of her soul, of the great coming day, and of the lady; and greatly troubled by her thoughts, and condemned in her conscience, she has mustered up courage to resolve, to be found upon the ground internally forbidden no more; that the chapel is her home, and she will abide there, and that when her ladyship shall call again, she will declare it all to her, and that she will do any thing, at any hour, to please her, save in the matter of religion, the worship of God, and her own conscience. May she have grace and strength to abide faithful unto death!

SUCCESS.—"We are going on well with our infant cause; the attendance is good, exceeding my highest expectation, nor can I forbear exclaiming, as I look over our crowded room, "What has God wrought!" O that God may so bless his word, that many may yield to the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"On the 24th of January, we formed a church; the ministers that were expected from the churches in the neighbourhood, were prevented being with us, but we had delegates from the church at B——. The service was solemn and interesting, and a hallowed feeling pervaded the assembly, and we felt conscious that He who was accustomed to be with his disciples when they met, as we then did in our upper room, was with us. A sermon was preached (by Mr. A.) on the preceding evening, on the nature and constitution of primitive churches; and an invitation was given to the congregation generally, to attend on the following evening, to witness our order. After singing and prayer, an address was given to the persons about to unite in church fellowship. A church covenant was then read, to which the members assented. The ordinance of the Lord's supper was then administered to the newly formed church, and members from other churches, who were present on the occasion.

"We hope this is but the beginning in good things, and that this little one, will soon become a thousand.

"May the Great Head of the church bless all the attempts made by the Society to advance his kingdom and glory."

IRISH EVANGELICAL SOCIETY.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF REV. J. WHITE, OF ENNISKILLEN.

Through the past quarter, I have been enabled to attend to my appointments. Generally speaking, there is no very visible improvement in our cause or congregation in Enniskillen; nor, indeed, as I have frequently intimated, is there any probability at present of gathering an Independent congregation. Notwithstanding, however, this depressing consideration, upon the whole, it is an important field of missionary cultivation, and a considerable amount of spiritual good, in individual

instances, has been achieved. As a proof and illustration of this, I shall now, according to my former promise, state a few of the leading circumstances of a case of conversion from Popery to the faith and hope of the Gospel. John —, the subject of this change (and who has recently gone to a better world, in the 23rd or 24th year of his age), although possessing mental ability above the average of his lot in life, continued an ignorant Roman Catholic until within a year and a half of his death. At this period, the state of his health caused him to be sent to the County Infirmary, in which place, you are aware, I have a regular service every Lord's-day. Here, for the first time, he began to read the Bible, and to attend the preaching of the Gospel. He was naturally of a retiring and modest disposition, and it was a considerable time before he disclosed to any one the change which his views and mind had undergone upon the subject of religion. This he did first to the matron of the infirmary, a pious woman, by whom it was first mentioned to me. Long before this he had attracted my notice, and I was always struck with the fervent devotion and seriousness which he evinced during our religious services. Indeed, I had taken it for granted, from his deportment in our meetings, that he was a piously brought up Methodist. What, then, must have been my surprise, when first informed that this same individual had been, until a short time before, a Roman Catholic in heart as well as life. This intelligence of course gave me additional interest in him, and at once, and not till then, had I a personal interview with him. I was equally astonished and gratified, to find at what a rapid rate light and truth had progressed in his mind and experience. He conversed, and frequently afterwards, about the things of the Spirit, and ascribed all he felt and enjoyed to the teaching of the Spirit, blessing the reading and ministry of the word.

At this time, as far as I can learn, no apprehensions were entertained by the surgeon respecting his death. At length, however, his disease proclaimed the proximity of death, and then came the trial of his faith. He had always shrunk, owing in a great measure to the natural timidity of his disposition, from anything like a public or formal renunciation of Popery, and he knew, that, as a matter of course, the priest would be sent for; he having entered the establishment as a professed Roman Catholic, and never publicly or openly professing Protestantism: the laws of the institution likewise requiring, that, in the prospect of death, the clergyman of the patient's profession should be sent for. At this time his mind was greatly exercised, and it was his fervent and constant prayer, for the attainment of which he requested an interest in the prayers of a few to whom he disclosed his mind, that, in the trying emergency, a mouth and wisdom suited to the occasion would be given him. From the attention paid to him by a few devoted persons, a short time before his death, some of the Roman Catholic inmates began to suspect that all was not right, and that he would probably be allowed to die without receiving the last rites of his church, and therefore kept their vigils two or three nights, watching the door of his chamber, to ascertain what would transpire. At all events, the priest was sent for, and was preparing to administer the sacrament of extreme unction, when — declared he should not, and asked him if he could forgive him his sins? The priest replied, that upon certain conditions he could. — affirmed that he could not; that he did not send for him; and that he had a great High Priest above, to whom, and to whom alone, he looked for acceptance, and admittance into the kingdom of heaven. The priest then inquired if he wished the Protestant clergyman to be sent for? He said he did not; he had no confidence in any man: through the Redeemer, he had no doubt, all his sins were forgiven. In short, the priest left him; pronouncing him, as Festus pronounced Paul, to be beside himself. But he was neither beside himself nor mad: he was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and in the full triumph of faith, his spirit went off to heaven.

N.B. The Committee of the Irish Evangelical Society having recently paid £325 to the Committee of the Irish Congregational Union, to assist them in their itinerant and other exertions in Ireland, are nearly £650 in debt, besides having claims now due upon them for the salaries of their agents, &c. for about £600 more. Contributions from their friends, and the friends of Ireland generally, are therefore most earnestly entreated in the present emergency, and will be thankfully received by Rev. G. Rose, Secretary, at the Society's office, 7, Blomfield Street, Finsbury.

COLONIAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

THE following letter is from a very laborious, devoted minister, the Rev. W. Clarke, who has now for nearly five years occupied an important station at London and Westminster, in Upper Canada. It was written without the remotest view to publication, and is now inserted here, because it will contribute to give British Christians at home, a correct and lively view of the state of things in the colonies. The singular ferment and conflict of opinions in those new communities, the active restlessness of mind, the startling fact that the voluntary principle, unimpeded, tends to excess, rather than want, of religious means—all are in this letter, almost without intention, clearly exhibited. Then the trials of a minister labouring in such a state of society, the necessity that he should be sustained by sympathy and aid from the father-land, the fact clearly indicated, that, in this race of sects, those represented by the best educated, and the best supported ministry, must, in the end, prevail; all these points receive illustration from our brother's candid statements. Nor is it possible not to admire the vigorous struggle against intemperance, that bane and plague of colonies, maintained by our brethren, whatever opinion may be entertained on the abstract principle of the total abstinence pledge, or, in many instances, of the wisdom of its practical adoption. Then this letter contributes to show, that if there be any scenes in the world, in which a testimony for truth is wanted, the colonies present them. There error, vice, and a coarse, loose, ill-compacted structure of society are inevitable, if the seeds of truth are not early sown; if the solemnities of worship, and the holy bonds of church fellowship do not, from the first, purify, soften, and harmonize the elements of a population, thrown together without concert, pressed with hardships, and having no leaders whom the people naturally confide in and follow.

To the Rev. JOHN ROAF.

London, Upper Canada, Dec. 8th, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR,—The receipts from my people, during the last quarter, are £16. 17s. 10d. That more is not raised for my support, and the relief of the Society, is a subject of much regret to my own mind; but, in candour, I am constrained to say, from the smallness of the population, and the multiplication of sects, I do not see a prospect of much increase, if of any. It is, however, some gratification, that, amid all the vicissitudes through which we have passed, there has been a gradual increase since my settlement here; and, with gratitude, I do not hesitate to say, that the prospects of Congregationalism are quite as bright, if not brighter, than at any period since it was first planted here by the Society. But in this, as well as in other towns in this country, if our distinctive views of "*faith, church order, &c.*," prevail, it will be with much labour and self-denial on the part of the missionary, and much patience, and confidence, and generosity, on the part of the Committee. In support of these remarks, allow me to refer to the past and present state of London, with regard to ministers and means of grace. In July, 1837, the population was one thousand. In July, 1841, it was two thousand, exclusive of the military. In the former year, a minister of the Church of England, and of the Methodists, preached on the Sabbath

mornings, and the Scotch Secession minister one sermon in two weeks. I commenced preaching on the Sabbath evening, then quite open, making seven sermons in two weeks. In the latter year, by the Church of England, by the Methodists, (three sects, Episcopal, Canadian, and British, who have each a separate chapel) by the Secession, Congregational, and Catholic ministers, there are *fifteen* sermons preached every Sabbath, besides Kirk, Baptists, and New Connexion Methodist ministers, who are frequently here on the Sabbath. The two former bodies intend to have settled ministers in the town, in the commencement of next year, which will make eleven ministers for a population of two thousand souls. In such a multiplicity of opinions, among a small population, a minister has not the opportunities of usefulness, nor of gaining support, that he would have, were the population larger, or the number of sects less. In fact, such a state of things, from the fastidiousness, "itching ears," &c., it creates, renders the path of the minister one of self-denial and labour, and frequently exposes him to mortification and neglect; and he will be under strong temptations to abandon his post, if he is not cheerfully and generously sustained by the brethren with whom he is connected. I may also add, that what is applicable to the towns, is becoming, to a certain extent, applicable to the rural districts. The real destitution is in the *Bush*. As to my own cause, my congregations are not so large as when my chapel was first opened. Individuals who worshipped with us from motives of convenience, have left, now they have ministers of their own order, or, because they have regular services twice on the Lord's-day, in their own churches. But still, the church has increased, and the finances have improved. Since the formation of the church, I have received sixty-one members, two have died, nine have been dismissed to distant churches, two have been expelled for intemperance, three have returned to the Secession—forty-five are now in communion. Of this number, fourteen have been received during the last three months. Seven I had the happiness of receiving at the Lord's table last Sabbath, one of whom was received by letter, six from the world, the fruit of my own ministry. In the month of May last, two deacons were chosen. The one residing in the town is a comfort to myself, and a blessing to the church. My engagements are as follows:—Sabbath morning and evening, London. Afternoon, Westminster. Week-day, one prayer-meeting, two Bible classes, two sermons. I am very happy to inform you that a holy feeling, and an increased concern for the enlargement of Zion, pervade our little communion. And, relying upon Divine promise, faithfulness, and power, we have resolved upon holding special services for the revival of religion, commencing on the last Thursday in the year, some of my brethren having promised to assist me.

I cannot close this communication without referring to the extension of the temperance cause in this town and neighbourhood, and from which, I anticipate the extension of the cause of Christ. When you gave us your very effective temperance speech here, in January last, our London society numbered about 100 members. We have, now, upwards of 700, after having given up fifty to form a military society in the town. At the urgent request of the society, I went to Montreal, as its delegate to the temperance convention, in June last. My pulpit was supplied during my absence by one of the students from our Academy. At the request of the convention, at which I presided, I have accomplished two temperance tours, which took me from my pulpit two Sabbaths, but which was acceptably supplied by a lay brother, a Mr. Silcox, an English Independent, who regularly preaches in his own neighbourhood, about twenty miles from hence.

During these tours, I travelled nearly 500 miles, attended twenty-seven meetings, where I either preached or delivered temperance addresses, originated fifteen new societies, and, through the Divine blessing, obtained about 450 names to the total abstinence pledge. Some of these societies are in a very flourishing condition,

in which are to be found persons, formerly the pests of their neighbourhood, now sober, industrious, virtuous, and even "clothed, and in their right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus." On account of these services, the following resolution was passed, in the largest meeting ever convened in this town, held in the large Methodist chapel last Monday week, by the whole assembly rising up.

Resolved—"That this society expresses its thanks to the Rev. W. Clarke, for his indefatigable zeal in the promotion of its interests, and for his unwearied exertions in the cause of temperance generally."

Whatever view may be taken of these excursions, I believe all will give me credit for good intentions; but I conscientiously feel that I acted under the direction of Providence, and regard them among the most useful exercises of my life. And though I would not *neglect* the important and direct duties assigned me by the Colonial Mission, yet, I trust I may be permitted to embrace every opening and opportunity which may be presented for promoting an enterprize, which I regard as closely identified with religion and godliness. With kind remembrance to your family, in which Mrs. C. unites, I am, yours truly,

W. CLARKE.

FINANCES FOR THE CURRENT YEAR.—This subject continues to cause the Committee great anxiety. The appeal for aid put forth in the month of January, February, and March, of last year, obtained more, by £500, than has been received this year by similar appeals, up to this date. Many brethren, who obtain annual assistance for the Society, have not yet sent their remittances. They are earnestly requested to do so without delay. The income of the Society for the present year will, it is feared, be seriously deficient. Contributions will be gratefully received by either the Treasurer, J. R. Mills, Esq., or by the Secretary, the Rev. A. Wells, at the Congregational Library, Blomfield Street, Finsbury.

TRANSACTIONS OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES.

THE TWELFTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES, will be held in the Congregational Library, Blomfield Street, Finsbury, on Tuesday, the Tenth of May, and, by adjournment, on Friday, the Thirteenth of May.

The committee announces, with great pleasure, that the Rev. Dr. Leifchild has engaged to preside in the meetings of the Assembly; that the Rev. John Roaf, of Toronto, is expected to represent the churches of Canada amidst the assembled brethren of the father-land; and that the Rev. Dr. David Russell, of Dundee, will appear among his English brethren, as the representative of the Scottish Congregational Union. Beloved brethren in Christ, from the Continent of Europe, have also expressed their intention to be present as witnesses of the proceedings of the Assembly, and for Christian fellowship with our brotherhood.

The meeting of the Colonial Missionary Society will be held as usual on the morning of Friday, the Thirteenth of May.

The affectionate intercourse of the brethren in the engagements connected with the Union, will be closed by the usual plain entertainment, provided in the Library immediately on the close of the meeting of the Colonial Society.

SYLLABUS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL LECTURE FOR 1842.

The Rev. WALTER SCOTT, Theological Tutor and President of Airedale College, Bradford, Yorkshire, will commence a course of Eight Lectures on *The Existence and Agency of Evil Spirits*, at the Congregational Library, London, Wednesday evening, April 6th, at Half-past Six o'clock, and continue them on each succeeding Friday and Wednesday evening, till concluded.

LECTURE I.—April 6th. **INTRODUCTORY.** Existence and Origin of Moral Evil—Mysteriousness, interesting nature, and importance of the subject—Propriety of investigating it—Spirit in which it should be done. Two difficult Questions.—1st. How did sin enter the Universe?—Different theories.—The Manichaean—Eternal natural necessity—Decrees of God—Free will of the creature—Calvinistic view of this subject—Edwards—Dr. Williams—Arminian hypothesis. 2nd. Why was sin permitted?—Different hypotheses—None of them satisfactory—Some important general principles—Necessity of modesty—Utility of this inquiry.

LECTURE II.—April 8th. **THE EXISTENCE OF EVIL SPIRITS.** Credulity and incredulity contrasted—Influence of the Scriptures on the general belief respecting Evil Spirits—Evidence from reason, analogy, and facts—Demons of the Heathen—Connexion of the doctrine with other tenets—Evidence from Scripture for their existence—The clearest passages examined first, such as 2 Pet. ii. 4, John viii. 44, &c. &c.—Russell Scott's interpretation refuted—Diabolus—Satan—The evidence and principles applied to more obscure texts, such as Gen. iii. &c. &c.

LECTURE III.—April 13th. **THE STATE, CHARACTER, AND POWERS OF EVIL SPIRITS.** Their original state—Perfect in purity and happiness—Their powers in that state inferred from the Scriptural accounts of good angels—Different ranks or orders—Their chief or ringleader—Edwards's views on this point—Their first sin—Its influence—Change which it must have produced—Their depravity—Condition hopeless—Intellectual powers great—Can they operate on matter?—Relation of spirits to place—Have they material vehicles?—Does sin necessarily weaken the intellectual powers?—Influence of Satan on the calamities of Job—Do they cause diseases, &c. now?—Spiritual influence.

LECTURE IV.—April 15th. **AGENCY OF EVIL SPIRITS AS IT REGARDS THE HUMAN RACE.** Intercourse with our world—Statements of Scripture on this subject, rational and accordant with fact—Witchcraft and its kindred arts possible—in some respects probable—Exod. xxii. 18, &c. examined—Why witchcraft was punished with death—The magicians of Egypt—Balaam—The Witch of Endor—Simon Magus—Stories of modern witchcraft—Character of supposed witches, and the witnesses against them—Influence of knowledge and learning on witchcraft.

LECTURE V.—April 20th. **ORACLES.** Sybils—The heathen oracles—Had Evil Spirits any share in them?—Generally at least managed by craft—Some of their principal responses and supposed prophecies examined—Cessation at the birth of Christ—Opinions of the fathers respecting them—Second sight, &c.

LECTURE VI.—April 22nd. **DEMONIACS.** Theory of Lardner, Farmer, and others, investigated and rejected—Real possessions—Some of the principal cases examined—Why so common in the time of Christ?—Belief and testimony of the primitive Christians—Are there any cases of possession now?

LECTURE VII.—April 27th. **TEMPTATION.** The temptation of Christ—Hypothesis of Farmer and others considered—Was Christ tempted merely by suggestion?—Common theory the most probable—The different temptations examined.

LECTURE VIII.—April 29th. **ORDINARY TEMPTATION.** Satan does tempt men to sin—How?—Some principles on this point certain—Does he know the thoughts?

—Can he suggest ideas?—Judas—Ananias—Can he direct the attention to tempting objects?—The advantages he possesses over us—invisibility, experience, &c. &c. —Our danger—apathy—Mistakes respecting the temptations of Satan—Our duty—Best way of resisting temptation—General improvement—Conclusion.

OPENING OF A NEW CHAPEL AT DUNFERMLINE.—A very elegant and commodious chapel was opened for public worship in Dunfermline, on Sabbath, the 2nd of January. Mr. Cullen, of Leith, preached in the forenoon; Mr. Thomson, the pastor of the church, in the afternoon; and Dr. Paterson in the evening. The house was respectably filled during the day, and in the evening crowded to excess. Hundreds, it is believed, were unable to obtain admittance. The audiences, since then, continue to be most encouraging. In the afternoon and evening, which are the only parts of the day on which there is regular preaching, the chapel is respectably filled. The church is increasing in numbers, and, with the pastor, are cheered by increasing tokens of the Divine blessing.—*Scottish Congregational Magazine*.

CENTENARY SERVICES AT THE OLD MEETING HOUSE, NORWICH.—The completion of the *second century* since the settlement of Congregationalist Christians in Norwich, has induced the members of the church which traces its existence to that distant event, to celebrate the Divine goodness to them and their ancestors in a series of religious services.

On Lord's-day, Feb. 27, their pastor, and the Rev. A. Reed, delivered two centenary discourses. That in the morning embraced a survey of the civil and religious position of the exiles, who, after some years' residence in Rotterdam, where they found shelter from religious persecution, returned in the year 1642 to their native city, and became the nucleus of the Norwich church.

In the evening, the preacher sought to remind the church of several practical lessons derivable from the above historic sketch. Probably these discourses will soon appear in print.

On Monday Evening, Feb. 28, a special Prayer Meeting.

On Tuesday Morning, March 1, the first stone of a new Sabbath-school was laid by the Rev. A. Reed. It is to cost about £700; the greater part of this sum is already raised. The structure will be large, commodious, and contiguous to the meeting.

At twelve o'clock, the school, consisting of about 350 children, was assembled. All preparations were made. The morning proving rainy, the ceremony was hastily performed—about £20 of fresh contributions was laid upon the stone. The assembly adjourned to the meeting, where the Rev. A. Reed addressed the adult audience, and the Rev. J. Curwen, of Stowmarket, the children. The children sang some pieces suitable to the occasion, and received some cakes, &c.

The pastor and his friends proceeded to plant several trees in the burial-ground, as memorials of the centenary.

In the evening, a large and attentive congregation was addressed in the meeting house by the Rev. J. Alexander, of Norwich; Rev. J. Curwen, of Stowmarket; Rev. W. Brock, of Norwich. The appeals and statements referred chiefly to the centenary, and also to the first anniversary of Mr. Reed's ordination, which occurred on that night.

On Wednesday evening, March 2, the members of the church met to tea in the assembly rooms—the expense being defrayed by subscription. After tea, the meeting commenced by solemn prayer and praise. Mr. Reed briefly opened the evening's engagements. The deacons of the church followed the pastor with addresses of much seriousness and power. Between the addresses, the pastor read, and the church

adopted, some letters which he had drawn up, and proposed to send to the sister church at Yarmouth—to the church at Rotterdam, where the Norwich expatriots found refuge—to the Norfolk association—to the Congregational Union—and to the congregation usually worshipping in the Old Meeting House. It was unanimously agreed to despatch the former to their various destinations, and to request the pastor to read the last after service on Sabbath morning, the whole church pledging themselves to pray for its success. They separated after praise and prayer.

Apart from these services—in consequence of Mr. Curwen's visit to the city, a densely crowded meeting was held in Princes Street Meeting, on *Thursday evening*, March 3, when Mr. C. addressed the friends, teachers, and children of Sunday schools, on the best methods of communicating instruction to the young.

BRIEF NOTES ON PASSING EVENTS.

It is not an easy task, within the narrow limits assigned for this department, satisfactorily to notice the many events of public interest which have transpired during the last two months, which have been probably the busiest of the year. Our readers must, therefore, excuse the brevity with which we glance at some of them, that we may find space for others that are more important, as relating to the progress of truth and goodness at home or abroad.

The FOREIGN news since we last wrote has supplied intelligence of the deepest interest and anxiety.

Our countrymen were pursuing their victorious course along the coasts of China, and, at the date of the last dispatches, the Island of Chusan was re-occupied, and the cities of Chinhoe and Ningpo were captured, and another attack on Canton meditated. A sad reverse, accompanied with the severest sufferings and a most frightful loss of life, has befallen our army on the west of the Indus. The expedition to *AFGHANISTAN* was undertaken to restore to the throne of his ancestors, the Schah Soojah, who had been in poverty and exile for nearly thirty years. The object of this enterprize was to place a friendly power between our Indian frontier and that of Persia, whose court, at the time it was undertaken, was far more disposed to further the wishes of the Russian Autocrat than of the Governor General of India. Our brave countrymen, on their march into that remote region, endured appalling hardships, and displayed prodigious valour. Though every where victorious, yet they felt that the cold, haughty bearing of the Schah would never win the regard of his subjects, and that the stability of his throne depended not on his own character, but on that of his British allies. Unhappily, a misunderstanding about the payment of a species of *black mail*, or tribute to petty, but independent, mountain chiefs, who command the passes, has given occasion for an insurrection amongst these daring mountaineers, who possess much of the courage and all the malignity of genuine Mussulmen. The details of the sad effects of their revolt against their sovereign and our army have not yet come to hand; but it is too well known that our troops were compelled to evacuate Cabool and commence a disastrous retreat, in which it is feared several thousands perished by the harrassing attacks of their foes amidst the rigours of winter and the effects of fatigue and famine. But a most humiliating part of the story is yet to be told. Sir W. H. M'Naughten, the British envoy and minister at the court of Cabool, while engaged in a conference with the sons of Dost Mahomed, the deposed Schah, on the 25th of December, having had terms proposed to him which he considered derogatory, replied, "That death is preferable to dishonour: that we put our trust in the God of battles, and in his name would defy our enemies;" when he was suddenly assassinated by the faithless Mussulmen, together with his attendants, his body being cruelly mutilated, and his head exhibited, with every mark of indignity, to

their barbarous soldiery. It is painful to add, that Lady McNaughten, with many others, fell into the hands of the rebels, but it is hoped that their persons have been held sacred. A most formidable British armament was on its way to Cabool, only awaiting the opening of the spring, and humanity shudders at the thought of the consequences which will necessarily follow this treacherous murder of the ambassador and representative of our gracious Queen. Policy dictates a course over which philanthropy and religion must weep.

The Bishop of JERUSALEM has made a public entry to the ancient capital, attended with a showy cavalcade, which the French papers smartly say, was not like Him who came "lowly, riding upon an ass," surrounded by humble pedestrians, his poor disciples. It is stated, that the Porte, having declined to issue any special firman in the bishop's favour, or to own his rank or mission, the worthy prelate soon found himself in painful, and, indeed, humiliating circumstances; for groups of boys and men, nominal Christians, gathered around his abode, and expressed their hostility by groans and offensive words, and when he performed Divine service, he was interrupted by menaces that threatened him personal injury. He applied to the Governor for a guard, which was declined. A message was sent to the Consul General at Beyrout, who dispatched the Phoenix steamer to Constantinople with intelligence for Sir S. Canning respecting it. Our ambassador is said to have made a very stringent representation to the Porte, but that no answer had been received. The College of Ullmahs are opposed to the building of a Protestant church at Jerusalem, and their Mahometan prejudices are strengthened by popish intrigues. And what is to follow, if the Turk will not give way? Must we go to war about it, or submit to have British authority despised? Such an alternative may follow this unadvised mixing up of our government with the ambitious projects of the Church. While all is excitement about this matter at the consulate in Beyrout, many of the clergy of Berlin ask for information respecting this Anglo-Germanic project before they make collections. In the mean time, we see that there is to be a collection at the Jews' Chapel in Bethnal Green, on behalf of "*The Jerusalem Bishopric Fund*!"

Affairs in the south of EUROPE must interest every friend of the rights and liberties of mankind. PORTUGAL has been the scene of recent political changes, the tendency of which is unfavourable to papal domination. SPAIN has been threatened by the intrigues of traitors, sheltered in the territory of France, with another fratricidal war. It is most satisfactory to record, that a frank and generous avowal of sympathy with the Regent of Spain has been made in Parliament by Lord Aberdeen and Sir Robert Peel, which has blighted the hopes of the plotting incendiaries, and made the name of England still more dear to the Spanish people. As the property of the church in that country has to a great extent been employed for the exigencies of the state, the Pope has published an Apostolic letter, addressed to the faithful, in which he states, "that Spain, once the most zealous country for the defence of Catholic union, is now menaced with separation from the Holy See, and that the Catholic religion is exposed to the attacks of discord and impiety;" and therefore orders that the prayers of all good Catholics shall be offered up for a change in the oppressed state of religion in that country. While Espartero forbids the receipt, circulation, or execution of any mandate from Rome, within the kingdom of Spain, under certain penalties, the Archbishop of Paris has obeyed the injunction of his Holiness, and has called upon the clergy of France to unite in prayer to that end. This has excited a lively discussion in the French papers, some of which deprecate the conduct of the archbishop, who, as a public functionary, and paid by the state, endangers the peace of the two countries. Others contend, that the church is independent of the state; to which it is replied, that that can never be while his stipend is derived from the funds of the nation. It has been truly and eloquently said: "Governments can no

more restrain mind within the church, than they can prevent minds from quitting or protesting against it. And they will find ere long that there is a Vesuvius beneath their feet, which nothing can render innocuous but procuring a peaceful vent for the lava, by destroying the connexion of church and state."*

It is worthy of remark, that while Sir Robert Peel eulogized the present government of Spain, and delivered sentiments to which the opposition warmly responded, Mr. O'Connell denounced Espartero, and complained of the sufferings of the clergy. By which it is apparent, that when the liberties of a nation are opposed to the interests of the church, even the most liberal Roman Catholics will uphold the authority of the one at the expense of the freedom of the other.

At HOME, public attention has been occupied by the movements of a truly royal visitor, the good King of Prussia; by the meeting of Parliament, and all the plans and projects of ministers and oppositionists to meet the exigencies of the state.

King Frederick William, of Prussia, has witnessed the pompous ceremonials of the royal baptism, with blazing tapers on the altar, and water, from Jordan, in the font, visited many distinguished persons and places, and received addresses of congratulation from incorporated and voluntary associations, amongst which, we may name deputations from the British and Foreign Bible Society—the Jews Society—and the dissenting ministers of London. He was entertained at (amongst other places) the Archbishop's Palace of Lambeth, where he revived the old Jacobite toast, and gave "Queen and Church." As a truly religious man, these scenes, when contrasted with the primitive simplicity of his own clergy, must suggest some interesting reflections, and it will require all the tact of his minister extraordinary for ecclesiastical affairs, to persuade him and his people, that such worldly splendour can comport with the genius of the New Testament.

Parliament met on the 3rd of February, and has been occupied in considering the proposed amendment of the Corn Laws, and the financial plans of the new Premier. Unsatisfactory as are Sir Robert's views on the corn question, yet his measure, if carried, will permanently lower the price of bread, and it must be owned, therefore, as a step toward the abolition of unjust restrictions on that prime article of life.

His proposed Income Tax is an unequal, inquisitorial, and, in its effects, will, assuredly, be found an immoral measure. The farmers and the clergy united to secure "the advent" of Sir Robert. Both classes will speedily pay for their triumph, and, what is more, will witness this measure calling forth, in the minds of the present generation, who know not what its practical working is, such a feeling of dissatisfaction throughout the country, as will drive from office, never to return, the men who, in a time of comparative tranquillity, could propose an impost that will only be borne by a free people when the enemy is at the gate.

* We quote this passage from a sound, right-minded, and eloquent leader in the *Morning Advertiser* of Saturday, March 19, and cannot but express our delight at finding such noble, Christian sentiments in a paper, which probably circulates daily amongst nearly half a million of the people. Surely, this is a sign of the times.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Favours received from Rev. Drs. Halley—Shoveller.

Rev. Messrs. W. Froggatt—R. W. Hamilton—Thomas James—A. Reed—T. Milner—A. Wells—W. Owen.

Mr. E. Griffith.